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Pretty Little Liars



Prosecutors want suspected covert Russian agent kept in jail

In this photo taken on Sunday, April 21, 2013, Maria Butina, leader of a pro-gun organization in Russia, speaks to a crowd during a rally in support of legalizing the possession of handguns in Moscow, Russia.

Associated Press
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Trump talks tougher, now says he warned Putin on meddling

By ZEKE MILLER, KEN THOMAS and LISA MASCARO,

WASHINGTON (AP) — His toughness with Vladimir Putin in question, President Donald Trump declared on Wednesday he had told the Russian leader face to face to stay out of America's elections "and that's the way it's going to be."

A few hours earlier, Trump had answered "no" when asked if the longtime U.S. foe was still targeting American elections. That reply put the president sharply at odds with recent public warnings from his own intelligence chief, but the White House quickly stepped in to say his answer wasn't what it appeared.

By day's end, in an interview with CBS News, Trump was ready to set an unmis-



President Donald Trump gestures while speaking during his meeting with members of his cabinet in Cabinet Room of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, July 18, 2018. Looking on is Deputy Secretary of Defense Patrick Shanahan.

Associated Press

takably forceful tone.

In Helsinki at their summit on Monday, he said, "I let him know we can't have this. We're not going to have it,

and that's the way it's going to be."

Would he hold Putin personally responsible for further election interference?

"I would, because he's in charge of the country."

The interview came at the end of two days of shifting statements on whether Trump agreed with the findings of U.S. intelligence agencies that Russia interfered in the 2016 election that sent him to the White House. Trump now says, with apparent reluctance, that he does agree, but he continues to add that others may have intervened as well. On Tuesday, he delivered a scripted statement to "clarify" — his word — his public doubting of U.S. intelligence findings of Russian interference in the election to harm his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton. His reservations, 18 months into his presidency and standing next to Putin on foreign soil, prompted blistering criticism at home, including from prominent fellow Republicans.

Then, on Wednesday, he was asked during a Cabinet meeting if Russia was still targeting the U.S., and he answered "no" without elaborating. That came just days after National Intelligence Director Dan Coats sounded an alarm, comparing the cyberthreat today to how the way U.S. officials said before 9/11 that intelligence channels were "blinking red" with warning signs that a terror attack was imminent.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said later that Trump actually was saying "no" to answering additional questions — even though he subsequently went on to address Russia.

"The president is wrong," Sen. Susan Collins of Maine said of Trump's one-word response. Told that Sanders had since clarified, she responded, "There's a walk-back of the walk-back of the walk-back of the walk-back? This is dizzying."

Amid bipartisan condemnation of Trump's embrace of a longtime U.S. enemy in Helsinki, the U.S. president delivered a rare admission of error Tuesday, saying he misspoke by one word when he said he saw no reason to believe Russia

had interfered in the 2016 U.S. election.

"The sentence should have been, 'I don't see any reason why I wouldn't, or why it wouldn't be Russia'" instead of "why it would," Trump said Tuesday of the comments he had made in Helsinki. He had tweeted a half-dozen times and sat for two television interviews since the Putin news conference, before correcting his remarks the next day. And the scripted cleanup pertained only to the least defensible of his comments. Trump has refined and sharpened his presentation in other ways in the two days since Helsinki.

At the news conference with Putin, he was asked if he would denounce what happened in 2016 and warn Putin never to do it again, and he did not directly answer. Instead, he went into a long rambling response including his demands for investigation of Clinton's email server and his description of Putin's "extremely strong and powerful" denial of meddling.

Trump asserted Wednesday at the White House that no other American president has been as tough on Russia. He cited U.S. sanctions and the expulsion of alleged Russian spies from the U.S., telling reporters that Putin "understands it, and he's not happy about it."

The muddled waters have deepened critics' concerns that Trump is not taking seriously enough threats to the U.S. electoral system. Pressed on why Trump has repeatedly passed on opportunities to publicly condemn Putin's actions, Sanders suggested Trump was working to make the most of an "opportunity" for the two leaders to work together on shared interests.

One such opportunity is what Trump termed an "incredible offer" from Putin to allow the U.S. access to Russians accused of election hacking and other interference. In exchange, Putin wants Russian interviews of Americans accused by the Kremlin of unspecified crimes. □

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Tale of sex, deception emerges about suspected Russian agent

By CHAD DAY and ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A 29-year-old gun-rights activist suspected of being a covert Russian agent was likely in contact with Kremlin operatives while living in the United States, prosecutors said Wednesday, accusing her of using sex and deception to forge influential connections.

The woman, Maria Butina, was photographed by the FBI dining privately with a Russian diplomat suspected of being an intelligence operative in the weeks before the envoy's departure from the U.S. last March, prosecutors said.

She also had contact information for people who investigators believe were employees of Russia's Federal Security Services, or FSB, the successor intelligence agency to the KGB. The allegations add to the portrait of a Russian woman who the Justice Department says worked covertly to establish back-channel lines of communication to the Kremlin and infiltrate U.S. political organizations, including the National Rifle Association, and gather intelligence for a senior Russian official to whom she reported.

Prosecutors also alleged she had a personal relationship with an American political operative and offered sex to another person in exchange for a position with a special interest organization.

Court papers do not name the individuals or the special interest group.

Butina awaits trial on charges of conspiracy and acting as an unregistered foreign agent for Russia. She pleaded not guilty Wednesday during a hearing in which U.S. Magistrate Deborah Robinson ordered her held in jail as the case moves forward, saying she was a flight risk.

After the hearing, Butina's attorney, Robert Driscoll, told reporters his client respected but strongly disagreed with the judge's decision.

"She's been aware of a criminal investigation into her conduct for months and made no attempt to flee," Driscoll said, saying Butina was not a Russian agent but rather a "young student seeking to make her way in America."

Citing her intelligence ties, the government had argued that Butina's legal status in the U.S. was based on "deception," saying her student visa and enrollment at American University were a cover for her covert work.

They also argue she posed an "extreme" risk of fleeing the U.S.

Butina was arrested over the weekend amid signs that she planned to leave the Washington area and possibly the country, prosecutors said.

Her lease on an apartment ends later this month, her belongings were packed at the time of her arrest and she had applied for a visa that would allow her to travel to and from the United States, prosecutors said. Her personal ties, "save for those U.S. persons she attempted to exploit and influence," are to Russia, according to the government court filing.

"She has every incentive to flee," Assistant U.S. Attorney Erik Kenerson said during the hearing.

The government was particularly concerned Butina would attempt to leave the U.S. using Russian diplomatic facilities or vehicles, Kenerson said, noting that American authorities would be powerless to stop her due to immunity protections.

The U.S. has no extradition treaty with Russia, he said. During the hearing, prosecutors showed a photo of Butina having dinner with a man they said was suspected of having ties to Russian intelligence.

They also read from notes found in her home that included reference to a potential job offer from the FSB and noted she had been photographed with Russian diplomatic personnel, including Sergey

Kislyak, Russia's former ambassador to the U.S.

Prosecutors said Butina was also regarded as a covert agent by a Russian official with whom she was in touch, with text messages discovered by the FBI showing how the official likened her to Anna Chapman, a Russian woman who was arrested in 2010 and then deported as part of a prisoner swap.

In March 2017, following news coverage of Butina, the Russian official wrote: "Are your admirers asking for your autographs yet? You have upstaged Anna Chapman."

She poses with toy pistols, while you are being published with real ones," according to the court filing. Butina and the official messaged each other directly on Twitter, prosecutors said. One such exchange occurred a month before the U.S. presidential election, when Butina said she understood that "everything has to be quiet and careful."

They also spoke on Janu-



This courtroom sketch depicts Maria Butina, a 29-year-old gun-rights activist suspected of being a covert Russian agent, listening to Assistant U.S. Attorney Erik Kenerson as he speaks to Judge Deborah Robinson, left, during a hearing in federal court in Washington, Wednesday, July 18, 2018.

Associated Press

ary 20, 2017, when Butina sent the official a photo of herself near the U.S. Capitol on the day Donald Trump was inaugurated president. According to court papers, the Russian official responded: "You're a daredevil girl! What can I say!" Butina responded, "Good teachers!"

Authorities have not named the Russian official, but during Wednesday's hearing, Driscoll said it is Alexander

Torshin, a former legislator who is now a senior official in the Central Bank of the Russian Federation.

Torshin, who became an NRA life member in 2012, was among a group of Russian oligarchs and officials targeted in April by Treasury Department sanctions for their associations with Russian President Vladimir Putin and their roles in "advancing Russia's malign activities." □

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U.S. House hopeful for Alaska seat has never been to the state

By **BECKY BOHRER**
Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — Carol Hafner is on the Democratic primary ballot for an Alaska U.S. House seat. She doesn't live in Alaska. In fact, she's never been to the state. Hafner, who listed New Jersey and South Dakota addresses in her candidate filing, says she's serious about running, though she doesn't plan to campaign in person. Democratic officials are questioning her authenticity and political affiliation. Under the U.S. Constitution, to serve in Congress one must meet age and citizenship requirements and inhabit the state at the time elected. Generally, Alaska candidates in such races are from the state. But not always.

In 2014, a New York man, who has run in other states, challenged then-U.S. Sen. Mark Begich in Alaska's Democratic primary and got crushed.

It happens elsewhere, too: In Wyoming, also in 2014, an Arizona man whose campaign consisted almost entirely of sock-puppet videos, won the Democratic nomination for U.S. House — unopposed — but lost to incumbent Republican Rep. Cynthia Lummis in the general election.

"You may have a right to run, doesn't mean you're going to be well-received, or it's going to be an easy campaign for you," said Jay Parmley, executive director of the state Democratic party. "If you're not from somewhere, that's a pretty tall order."

Hafner faces long odds and has focused her attention online, where she boasts a comparable number of Twitter followers to those of the highest-profile can-



In a photo taken Thursday, July 12, 2018, Carol Hafner poses for The Associated Press in Lincroft, N.J. Hafner is a congressional candidate running in the August primary election in the U.S. House in Alaska.

didates: Democrat Dimitri Shein and independent Alyse Galvin. Independents who want Democratic support can run in the party primary.

Shein and Galvin have been campaigning and participating in spirited debates ahead of the Aug. 21 primary. Republican U.S. Rep. Don Young faces little-known opponents in his primary.

Hafner listed on her candidacy filing a home and mailing address in New Jersey. She also listed an address at a mail-drop location in South Dakota popular with RVers and others with more transient lifestyles as her campaign contact on Alaska's website listing of candidates. Public records show property and voter registration records for Hafner in New Jersey.

The New Jersey addresses match those used by Eric

Hafner during a failed run as a Democrat in an Oregon U.S. House primary earlier this year, which caught the attention of Julie Olsen, an Anchorage Democratic party leader. She said she was worried that Eric Hafner had "hijacked" Carol Hafner's identity and created an online persona to file for office. Olsen supports Shein.

Hafner, 64, said Eric Hafner is her son.

She said he also ran unsuccessfully in the Republican primary for a U.S. House seat in Hawaii in 2016. Efforts to reach him were unsuccessful.

The Associated Press reached out to Carol Hafner via the email listed as her campaign contact. She responded by phone. Hafner said she travels extensively and considers South Dakota her base. She said she has been in New

Jersey for a family illness but is "on my way out."

She felt compelled to run to share her perspective on the environment, including climate change, education, health care and other issues. Hafner said she was stunned that Alaskans have kept Young in office for 45 years.

"I want to do good in a place that I feel a kinship for," she said.

She said she's angry that Olsen has been "playing Nancy Drew" and questioning her run.

People must pull together to solve problems, Hafner said.

"Don't lock me out just because I'm not a homeboy," she said, adding later: "You ought to be thankful that I care enough and I'm interested enough and passionate enough to want to make things better."

"I'm certainly permitted to

do what I have done," she said.

The Division of Elections said challenges to Hafner's candidacy by Parmley and Olsen were received after the protest deadline passed. The division said Hafner properly filed to run, a process that includes submitting a \$100 filing fee, and it had no reason to question the veracity of her candidacy.

Olsen said she'd like to see changes to the process, such as having a candidate file in person or provide a phone number or copy of their driver's license.

Kimberly Slone, of Wasilla, found out about Hafner by Googling candidates.

Slone said she sent Hafner via email questions about the Arctic National Wildlife and found that she opposes drilling there, as does Slone.

"I thought how audacious of her to run for election in Alaska," Slone said.

She donated to Hafner's campaign, but Slone said she's not sure who will get her vote. It doesn't matter to her if a candidate lives outside Alaska "as long as the candidate shows up to campaign and is knowledgeable about the state and will move here as required."

Suzanne Hudson, an antique shop owner in Juneau, said she hasn't been paying much attention to the race but bristled at the idea of an outsider weighing in on Alaska issues.

"If you don't live in the state and don't know what's going on personally, you should stay out of it, because you could be making a law or a rule that's going to really hurt a lot of people, even though it's your opinion that it's going to be better," she said. □

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Growing fire shows potential for explosive Northwest season

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A fast-moving fire fueled by gusting winds in the Pacific Northwest has forced dozens of households to evacuate and prompted Oregon Gov. Kate Brown to declare an emergency Wednesday.

The flames near the city of The Dalles started Tuesday and expanded overnight to more than 45 square miles (117 kilometers), chewing through fields of wheat in farm country and bringing back memories of a devastating wildfire last summer that devastated a scenic area further west in the Columbia River Gorge. The blaze about 80 miles (130 kilometers) east of Portland doesn't bode well for a Pacific Northwest fire season that's expected to be worse than normal, with drought conditions in many areas and above-average temperatures forecast through September, the center said.

One home has been destroyed, and a burned transmission line caused power outages Wednesday.

It comes as other states across the American West, including California and Colorado, have struggled with massive blazes that have torn through land gripped by drought.

In Oregon, very low humidity, high temperatures and winds gusting up to 30 mph (48 kph) made the flames explosive in thin grasses and wheat fields, said Robin DeMario, a spokeswoman for the Northwest Interagency



In this Tuesday, July 17, 2018 photo, the Central Point fire burns along Biddle Road in Central Point, Ore.

Coordination Center.

Firetrucks tried to spray water on the leading edges of the fire as it burned through acres of wheat, with everything behind the flames charred black.

"These light fuels go up very quickly," DeMario said. "The grassy stalks are very dry, they have lost the moisture in those stalks, and so if a fire start begins, we call it 'flashy fuels' because it burns very fast and very

hot."

The Columbia River Gorge separating Oregon and Washington is still recovering from a wildfire last year that scorched 75 square miles (194 square kilometers), ravaged popular hiking trails and marred stunning vistas.

It burned in the western end that's home to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, which attracts more than 3 million

tourists a year and holds North America's largest concentration of waterfalls. The landscape further east along the river transitions to grasslands and flat, open vistas dotted with wheat fields — where the fire was burning Wednesday.

Elsewhere in the state, several fires started by lightning over the weekend burned as temperatures flirted with triple digits.

One in southern Oregon

forced two houses to evacuate and 31 more homeowners to get ready to flee Wednesday after the flames spread near the California border.

Another blaze about 200 miles (322 kilometers) east of Portland got tamped down after farmers and ranchers used their heavy equipment to help create lines to contain the flames. Some fences and horse corals burned, but no homes were lost, said Melissa Ross, Morrow County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman.

"In some instances, it was very close (and) if not for all those who turned out to help, the end of this story would have been very different," she said.

Elsewhere in the Pacific Northwest, a small fire near Spokane Valley, Washington, prompted evacuation notices for 700 homes. Several homes caught fire, according to Spokane Valley Fire Department spokeswoman Melanie Rose. Officials said at least one structure had been completely destroyed.

In California, a deadly forest fire was spreading west of Yosemite National Park, keeping a key route into the park shut down during tourist season and forcing communities to evacuate. But the park's trails, campgrounds, restaurants and lodges are open, though smoke is polluting the air and limiting visibility.

More than 1,800 firefighters are battling the blaze that started Friday and now spans 27 square miles (70 square kilometers), the U.S. Forest Service said. □

City attorney criticizes law used to arrest Stormy Daniels

By **ANGIE WANG** and **ANDREW WELSH-HUGGINS**
Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — The state law that police cited in porn actress Stormy Daniels' arrest should not be enforced, an Ohio city attorney said.

Future charges filed under that law will not be prosecuted, wrote Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein Wednesday in a memo to the city's police chief. Klein also dismissed charges brought against two other employees arrested with Daniels.

The 10-year-old law states dancers at "sexually oriented" businesses are prohibited from touching customers and vice versa.

Klein called the law "glaringly inequitable" because its applicability depends on how regularly the employee performs. He also says employees who touch police are not in violation



This photo provided by the Franklin County Sheriff's Office on Thursday, July 12, 2018, shows porn actress Stormy Daniels.

Associated Press

because on-duty public officials are not legally considered patrons.

Daniels, 39, was arrested last week and accused of illegally rubbing undercover police officers' faces against her bare breasts during a performance at a strip club. Prosecutors dropped charges hours later, saying the law only applied to those who regularly performed at the club. This was Daniels' debut at Sirens in Columbus.

Last week, Columbus police Chief Kim Jacobs said she took full responsibility for the mistake made in Daniels' arrest, and the undercover officers' motivations will be reviewed internally. Without providing details, Jacobs said unsubstantiated allegations about their motivations were circulating on social media. Daniels' lawyer Michael Avenatti said some of the officers had what appeared

to be "very Pro-Trump" social media pages.

Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, claims to have had sex with Donald Trump before he became president.

Avenatti said Wednesday he applauds Klein's decision. The lawyer representing the other employees arrested said he was glad the situation was promptly addressed. But his clients' arrests still caused them lasting harm, including harassment and damage to their reputations, said attorney Ed Hastie.

Hastie added the undercover operation was a poor use of police resources.

"Vice teams should be stopping drug use instead of concerning themselves with the technicalities of what my clients were wearing," he said.

Messages seeking comment were left Wednesday for Columbus police. □

Soy "milk" makers may need to find alternative description



This Feb. 16, 2017, photo shows the ingredients label for almond milk at a grocery store in New York. Soy and almond drinks don't come from cows, so regulators may soon ask them to stop calling themselves "milk."

By **CANDICE CHOI**
AP Food Industry Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Soy and almond drinks that bill themselves as "milk" may need to consider alternative language after a top regulator suggested the agency may start cracking

down on use of the term. The Food and Drug Administration signaled plans to start enforcing a federal standard that defines "milk" as coming from the "milking of one or more healthy cows." That would be a change for the agen-

Associated Press

cy, which has not aggressively gone after the proliferation of plant-based drinks labeled as "milk." FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb talked about the plans this week, noting there are hundreds of federal "standards of identity"

spelling out how foods with various names need to be manufactured.

"The question becomes, have we been enforcing our own standard of identity," Gottlieb said about "milk" at the Politico event Tuesday. "The answer is probably not."

Standards of identity have been the source industry spats as American diets have evolved, including fights about what gets to be called mayonnaise and yogurt. More recently, there are disagreements over what to call meat grown by culturing cells, a science that's still emerging.

The FDA can't just change the way it enforces a standard without warning, Gottlieb said. Since it plans to take a different approach to enforcement, he said the FDA will have to first develop guidance notifying companies of the change and ask for public comment. That guidance will probably be issued in a year, he said.

Gottlieb said the agen-

cy expects to get sued, since dictionary definitions are broader and say milk comes from a lactating animal or a nut.

The National Milk Producers Federation said it welcomes Gottlieb's recognition that the labeling practices of many "plant-based dairy imitators" violate federal standards. The industry group had recently renewed its push for the FDA to crack down on nondairy drinks calling themselves "milk." The Good Food Institute, which advocates for plant-based alternatives, says the term "milk" should be permitted with modifiers for nondairy drinks.

"For the same reason that you can have gluten-free bread and rice noodles, almond milk and soy milk are the most clear and best terms for describing those products," said Bruce Friedrich, the group's co-founder.

The FDA declined to comment on whether the agency would enforce other standards, such as for yogurt. □



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ASHORE TO ASSIST ON HOLIDAY

Investigation leads to closure of 6 Virginia fox pens

By SARAH RANKIN
Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — A two-year investigation has led to the closure of six of Virginia's nearly 30 fox pens, large enclosures in which wild foxes are contained and chased by hunting dogs, Attorney General Mark Herring's office said. Herring's office told The Associated Press ahead of an official announcement Wednesday that its Animal Law Unit had secured nine guilty pleas from people involved in a sweep targeting fox pens stocked with illegally purchased wildlife. Six pens lost their licenses as a result. They are among the first licenses to be revoked since the passage of a 2014 law intended to phase out the controversial practice, Herring spokeswoman Charlotte Gomer said. "Any individuals who participate in activities like wildlife trafficking or illegal fox penning should be brought to justice," Herring said in a statement.

Supporters say the facilities, which are required to have an escape for the foxes, provide a safe way to train hunting dogs. But animal welfare groups and other opponents argue the pens are cruel to the foxes, which are sometimes killed, and say they don't have a true element of fair chase like a hunt in the wild. Some compare fox penning to dog fighting. Herring's office said the practice sometimes deviates from a training exercise to include gambling or competitions to see whose dog can catch the confined fox. The 2014 law made erecting or maintaining such a pen illegal, though it grandfathered in existing facilities that will eventually have to close.

As of Tuesday, there were



In this Jan. 31, 2013, file photo, opponents of fox penning wear orange hats as they wait for a meeting of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee at the Capitol in Richmond, Va.

29 permitted fox pens in Virginia, mostly in the south-central part of the state and Tidewater region, said Bob Duncan, executive director of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. They range in size from a minimum of 100 acres to 600 or 700 acres, he said. Fox hunting is a centuries-long tradition in the state, but fox penning emerged in the 1980s as a way to eliminate damage from hunts running through crops or animals being killed along highways, Duncan said. "These things have become hugely popular," he said. "People travel all across the Southeast and even across the country to train dogs and run dogs." The nine people who pleaded guilty in the investigation were charged with illegally purchasing wildlife

and received suspended sentences of varying lengths. Some faced fines. The purchase and sale of wildlife is generally prohibited in Virginia, although pen owners may contract the services of a trapper to purchase a certain number of foxes a year, with a fee that's supposed to be based on the trapper's time and effort, Duncan said. "These convictions clearly demonstrate the cruel, inhumane nature of fox pen-

ning and the illegal activity that can accompany it," Matthew Gray-Keeling, Virginia state director for The Humane Society of the United States, said in a statement. "We sincerely appreciate Attorney General Herring's work to strictly enforce Virginia's laws and shut down these illegal and inhumane operations." Kirby Burch, chief executive officer of the Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance, said he was glad to see people be-

ing punished for dealing in illegal wildlife.

But Burch added that he hoped the preserves could eventually reopen, saying it was unfortunate that a handful of violators were shining a bad light on a sport he said many of his organization's approximately 90,000 members enjoy. The pens that lost their permits are in Buckingham, Lunenburg, Appomattox, Dinwiddie, King and Queen, and Brunswick. □

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EU fines Google a record \$5 billion over mobile practices

By RYAN NAKASHIMA

RAF CASERT

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European regulators came down hard on another U.S. tech giant Wednesday, fining Google a record \$5 billion for forcing cellphone makers that use the company's Android operating system to install Google search and browser apps.

The European Union said Google's practices restrict competition and reduce choices for consumers.

While Google can easily afford the fine, the ruling could undermine the company's business model, which relies on giving away its operating system in return for opportunities to sell ads and other products.

Google immediately said it will appeal, arguing that its free operating system has led to lower-price phones and created competition with its chief rival, Apple.

Android has "created more choice for everyone, not less," Google CEO Sundar Pichai tweeted.

The fine, which caps a three-year investigation, is the biggest ever imposed on a company by the EU for anticompetitive behavior.

It is likely to stoke tensions between Europe and the U.S., which regulates the tech industry with a lighter hand and has complained that the EU is singling out American companies for punishment.

Still, some U.S. politicians welcomed the ruling.

Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut tweeted that the fine should "be a wake-up call" to the Federal Trade Commission and "should lead US enforcers to protect consumers." Blumenthal previously called on regulators to investigate how Google tracks users of Android phones.

In its ruling, the EU said Google broke the rules by requiring cellphone makers to take a bundle of Google apps if they wanted any at all.

The bundle contains 11 apps, including YouTube, Maps and Gmail, but reg-



EU Commissioner Margrethe Vestager holds a press conference on a Competition Case involving Google Android, in Brussels on Wednesday, July 18, 2018.

Associated Press

ulators focused on three that had the biggest market share: Google Search, Chrome and the company's app store, called Play Store.

The EU gave Google 90 days to come up with remedies that could allow rival search apps and browsers onto more phones. Failure to comply risks a further penalty of up to \$15 million a day.

The EU also took issue with Google's payments to wireless carriers and phone makers to exclusively pre-install the Google Search app.

It ruled, too, that Google broke the law by forcing manufacturers that took its apps to commit to not selling devices that use altered versions of Android.

EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager said that given the size of the company, the 4.34 billion euro fine is not disproportionate.

The penalty is on top of a 2.42 billion euro fine (\$2.8 billion) that regulators imposed on Google a year ago for favoring its shopping listings in search results. Google's parent company, Alphabet, made \$9.4 billion in profit in the first three months of the year and has over \$100 billion in cash reserves.

"The important thing is not to be distracted by the size of the fine. What is important is that Google has to change its abusive behavior," said Rich Stables, CEO of the rival search engine Kelkoo.

Android is an open-source operating system that Google lets cellphone makers use for free. As a result, it is the most widely used system, beating Apple's iOS.

The EU wants to ensure that phone makers are free to pre-install apps of their choosing. It also wants cellphone makers to be able to more easily use altered versions of Android, like Amazon's Fire OS.

Google argues that letting phone makers choose their apps could hurt the company's main means of making money through Android — advertising and the sale of content and apps. Apple, in contrast, makes most of its money from the sale of devices.

Giving phone makers more freedom to use altered versions of Android could also hurt Google. Samsung, a hugely popular maker of Android phones, could, for example, break off and take much of the Android system with it. Samsung had no immediate comment.

Daniel Castro, vice presi-

dent of the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a think tank in Washington, said the ruling "is a blow to innovative, open-source business models."

The main complainant against Google was FairSearch, a Brussels-based lobbying group that has been backed by Oracle, TripAdvisor and Nokia. It called the ruling "an important step in disciplining Google's abusive behavior."

European regulators have set the pace in shaping rules for the tech industry.

The EU has clashed repeatedly with Microsoft over the years, fining it over its bundling practices and its promotion of its Internet Explorer browser.

In 2016, the EU ruled that Apple was getting preferential treatment from the Irish government and demanded it pay \$15 billion in back taxes. The EU has also tangled with Amazon and Intel.

European regulators have likewise taken a harder line on data privacy. After the scandal this spring involving the misuse of Facebook users' personal data during the U.S. presidential election and other campaigns, the EU began enforcing tougher new rules.

The Google crackdown comes at a sensitive time for trans-Atlantic relations, with President Donald Trump lambasting the EU as a "foe" only last week. The U.S. imposed tariffs on EU steel and aluminum this year, and the EU responded with duties on American goods.

"We have to protect consumers and competition to make sure consumers get the best of fair competition," Vestager said. "We will continue to do it, no matter the political context." □



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Under Assad's grip, uneasy co-existence with former rebels

By **BASSEM MROUE**

Associated Press

TALBISEH, Syria (AP) — Former rebel commander Omar Melhem has nearly come full circle.

He was a colonel in the Syrian army when the uprising against President Bashar Assad began in 2011. He defected a year later and joined the armed revolt against the Syrian leader. Then, when Assad's forces marched into Talbiseh, he was among the rebels who handed over their weapons and agreed to a surrender deal that would allow them to stay in their hometown instead of a life of exile in the country's north.

As the Syrian government reasserts control over opposition strongholds, such co-existence between the military and former rebel fighters like Melhem is now the new reality.

The 51-year-old former rebel commander now serves as a liaison between residents and other ex-rebels with the Syrian government, helping some rejoin the military and negotiating with top security officials about services in the town.

He says war brought only death and destruction to his town, and the deal he and other rebels reached with the government aimed to end the years-long misery of its residents. "People got tired of war, got tired of the fighting, got tired of the destruction. ... They've reached the conclusion that they were used by other countries, that we were a game to them," Melhem said, referring to the U.S. and other West-



In this Tuesday, July 17, 2018, photo, Syrian army commander Col. Youssef Sibahi speaks with troops at a military post in the town of Rastan, Syria.

Associated Press

ern nations, Turkey and the Gulf states that backed the rebels, and Russia and Iran, which backed the Syrian government.

Among the first Syrian towns to take up arms against the government, Talbiseh and nearby Rastan are now part of what some call a "reconciliation" process but others consider a humiliating surrender following years of indiscriminate bombardment and siege. Melhem is among thousands of rebels who were forced to surrender in exchange for being allowed to stay. Hundreds of other fighters refused and left with their families for rebel-held parts of northern Syria, joining tens of thousands of government opponents forced into exile.

He now carries a list of

names of rebels in the town and another of all the weapons that were handed back to the government as he lobbies for better services.

At one point, Melhem complained to an army colonel about the lack of round-the-clock water and electricity supplies. The officer's response: Be patient. It's been less than two months since the town was retaken.

When Melhem said that the town's residents cooperate with those who treat them well but won't tolerate any mistreatment, the officer responded, "Are you coming here to flex your muscles?" Then they both laughed.

Both towns are mostly deserted. Talbiseh, which once had a population of 70,000, now is home to just

a few thousand.

During a tour by an Associated Press team, the first by a foreign media outlet, former insurgents wandered the streets, many without jobs. They said they were banned from leaving the region and complained the Syrian government was going after them for back taxes dating to 2011.

Most shops were closed and homes, riddled with bullet holes and shell damage, were empty. A giant poster of Assad stood at the town's entrance.

Syria's conflict, which has killed nearly half a million people and displaced half the country's population, broke out in March 2011, with Arab Spring-inspired protests in the southern city of Daraa calling for reforms and more freedoms.

Within days, the protests spread around the country and after two months of government crackdowns, gunmen in Talbiseh and Rastan began fighting back using automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades. The two towns sank into cycles of bloodletting and endured a years-long government siege that left residents to survive on small amounts of food. Relief came only last year after they were included in one of four de-escalation zones agreed upon by Russia, Iran and Turkey, which back rival groups in Syria's conflict. "Life was very harsh, products were not available. It was even hard to find a loaf of bread," said 61-year-old farmer Abdul-Latif al-Khatib. "My daughters used to scream in fear and we would run around not knowing where to hide," said 42-year-old Hayat al-Ghard, who remained in Talbiseh with her husband and seven young daughters. She said her daughters are illiterate as schools were mostly closed after the fighting began. Melhem was the military commander of Jaysh al-Tawheed, the largest rebel faction in the region, with some 3,000 fighters. He boasts now, not of fighting government forces, but of ridding the region from the Islamic State group in 2015 and al-Qaida-linked fighters a year earlier.

"Jaysh al-Tawheed was created with the goal of fighting Daesh and we kicked them out of our area," Melhem said, using an Arabic term for IS. □

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Australia succeeds in stopping migrants but many in limbo

By **ROD McGUIRK**
Associated Press

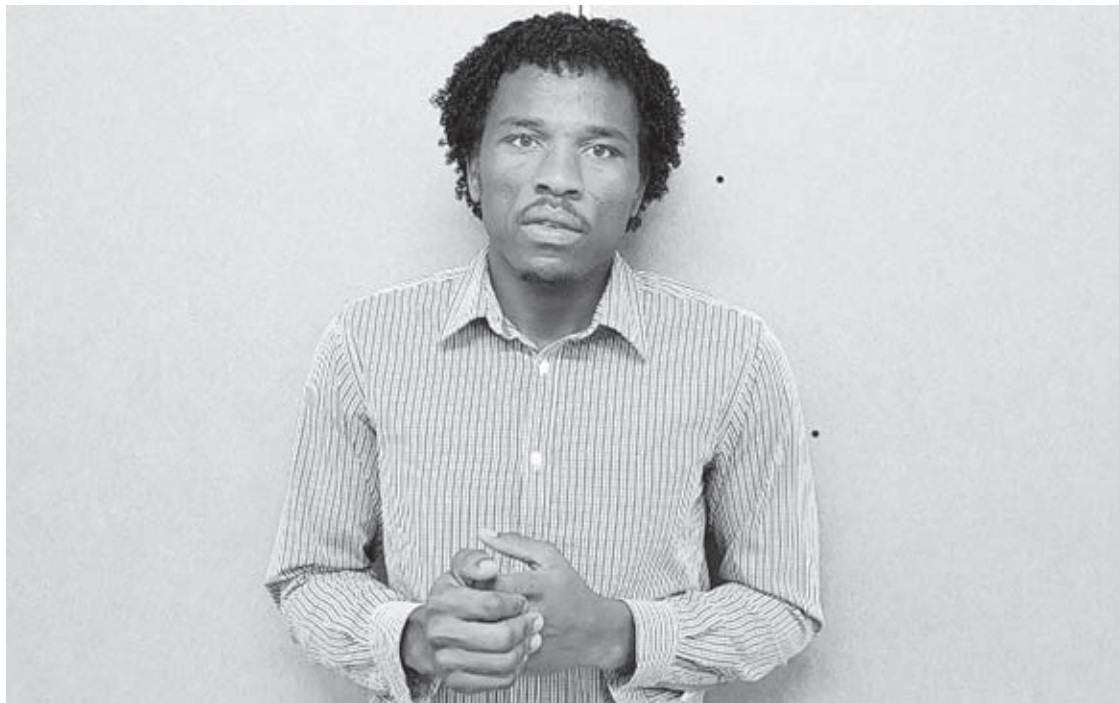
CANBERRA, Australia

(AP) — When Aziz Abdul reached Australia's Christmas Island aboard a smuggler's boat, he had no idea that weeks earlier in 2013, his fate as a refugee from Sudan seeking a new life in a new world had been sealed.

Australia drew a line in the sand on July 19, 2013, to stem a rising tide of asylum seekers brought by people smugglers on long and treacherous ocean voyages. No refugees who attempted to reach its shores by boat from that date forward would ever be allowed to make Australia their home.

Five years later, the polarizing policy — both lauded as a template for other countries and condemned as a cruel abrogation of Australia's international obligations — appears to have succeeded as a deterrent. The rickety fishing boats that were arriving from Indonesian ports at a rate of more than one a day have virtually stopped. But the question of what will become of the hundreds of asylum seekers banished by Australia to sweltering immigration camps in the poor Pacific island nations of Papua New Guinea and Nauru has become more pressing.

"The simplest way for me to describe it is it's just like hell," Abdul, 25, told The Associated Press by phone from an immigration hostel in a Papua New Guinea village. He now hopes to be chosen among the 1,250 refugees barred by Australia but who President Don-



In this July 17, 2018 photo, the 25-year-old Sudanese refugee Abdul poses at the East Lorengau Refugee Transit Center on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea.

Associated Press

ald Trump has reluctantly agreed to accept as part of a deal struck between the Australian government and former President Barack Obama's administration.

"You send people to a place and you want those people to either die or go back to where they came from even if that place is very, very dangerous," Abdul said. There was a growing sense of hopelessness and fear of hostile villagers among the asylum seekers, some of whom no longer speak because of their despair, he said.

Daniel Webb, director of Australia's Human Rights Law Center, told the U.N. Human Rights Council last month that Nauru's refugee population included 134 children, 40 of whom had been born there. The number had dropped to 124 by this week, with some children sent to Australia

for medical treatment and others to the United States for resettlement.

"With every anniversary, with every birthday and with every death, the sense of hopelessness and sheer exhaustion in these island prisons rises," Webb said this week. "Our government can't just imprison them forever."

Australia offers to pay thousands of dollars to asylum seekers who agree to go home, and many have taken up the offer over the past five years rather than languish any longer in their island limbos. Australia also struck a multi-million dollar deal with Cambodia to accept refugees who agree voluntarily to leave Nauru and Papua New Guinea, but few took up that offer. New Zealand has offered to resettle 150, but successive Australian governments have declined for fear that the wealthy near-

neighbor would become a back door for the exiled refugees to enter Australia. The island camps have been the scenes of riots, murder, suicide and escalating mental illness.

The Australian government last year reached a settlement of around 90 million Australian dollars (\$68 million) with more than 1,905 asylum seekers who sued over their treatment in Papua New Guinea.

The asylum seekers were seeking damages in an Australian court for alleged physical and psychological injuries they say they suffered.

Australia blames the asylum seekers for their plights. The government believes they remain in the islands under the mistaken belief that Australia will eventually relent and let them in. That's what happened after Australia adopted a forerunner to the current

policy in 2001.

When Norwegian freighter MV Tampa rescued 433 Afghan asylum seekers from a sinking Indonesian fishing boat and attempted to deliver them to the nearest port, Christmas Island, Australia sent special forces troops to stop the ship. The Tampa with its human cargo was sent to Nauru under Australia's new policy of keeping asylum seekers from its coast that became known as the Pacific Solution.

Conservative Prime Minister John Howard was re-elected weeks later in a campaign that focused on his tough stance on asylum seekers.

The boat arrivals slowed over the next few years as Australia-funded immigration detention camp populations grew on Nauru and Papua New Guinea. A few countries took some refugees off Australia's hands. In the end, Australia quietly accepted the last several hundred refugees without political protest.

A new center-left Labor Party government closed the Nauru camp in February 2008, when the final 21 Sri Lankan refugees were flown to Australia. Papua New Guinea had been closed years earlier. Then-Immigration Minister Chris Evans called the Pacific Solution policy "a cynical, costly and ultimately unsuccessful exercise introduced on the eve of a federal election."

But when the boats started coming back, it was a Labor government that reopened the camps on Nauru and Papua New Guinea in 2012. □

In battle for Putin's affections, cupid favors Xi over Trump

By YANAN WANG
Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — In the race to woo Vladimir Putin, China's Xi Jinping is beating Donald Trump.

Trump's quest to kindle a romance with the Russian president has made some Americans squirm.

His gushy performance in Helsinki, expressing confidence in Putin instead of U.S. intelligence agencies, ignited outrage across the political spectrum back home.

Should Beijing worry that Trump could succeed in pulling Putin away from China? Probably not, political analysts say.

Trump's charm offensive might cause Beijing a twinge of unease, given its tumultuous history with Moscow. But in this love triangle, Putin and Xi are linked by strategic necessity, plus genuine personal affection.

"Trump has made clear that he is a big fan of Putin," said Li Xin, director of the Russia center at the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Studies.

"But everyone knows that Trump frequently changes his mind," said Li. "His attempts to be friendly cannot compete with the history and the intimacy of Xi and Putin's relationship."

Moscow and Beijing are linked by practical and political needs.

China wants Russian oil and gas to power the world's second-largest economy.

Moscow needs Chinese trade and investment more than ever following its estrangement from the West over its 2014 annexation of Crimea.

They share a loathing of Islamic radicalism in Central Asia and resent U.S. global dominance.

"Both leaders seek to curtail American influence, weaken U.S. alliances and modify the international system so it is more favorable to them," Bonnie Glaser of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington said in an email.

Trump raves about Putin's political skills, but the Chinese and Russian leaders have long enthused publicly about their unique rapport.

Ahead of a visit to Beijing in June, Putin reminisced about celebrating his birthday with Xi



In this June 8, 2018, file photo, Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping walk together during a welcome ceremony outside the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China.

over vodka and sausages five years ago.

"I've never established such relations or made such arrangements with any foreign colleague, but I did it with President Xi," Putin told Chinese state TV.

Xi presented Putin with China's first "friendship medal" — an ornate gold necklace — and called him "my best, most intimate friend."

The Russian and Chinese presidents have spent more time with one another than either has with any other foreign leader.

As far as it is possible for global leaders to become real friends, they are "setting a pretty high bar," said Alexander Gabuev, a Sino-Russian relations expert at the Carnegie Moscow Center.

"China has nothing to worry about," said Gabuev.

Following the Helsinki summit, China's Foreign Ministry welcomed improved U.S.-Russian relations. A spokeswoman said Beijing was "full of confidence" about its own ties with

Moscow.

"China-Russia relations will not be affected by any external factors," said Hua Chunying.

Yet there is the remote possibility Washington and Moscow might one day feel the need to unite against China if its rising influence tramples their interests, suggested commentator Harry Kazianis.

"While we might rightly see Moscow as a rogue nation today, tomorrow it could be a partner in containing a common foe," Kazianis wrote this month in The American Conservative.

That is unlikely any time soon, experts say.

Trump backtracked on one of his comments after the outcry back home over his apparent dismissal of U.S. intelligence reports that Moscow meddled in the 2016 election.

Rather than view Trump as a rival for Russia's friendship, China is more likely to be pleased by the growing split between Trump and American allies in Europe.

"Beijing has better ties with

both Washington and Moscow than they have with each other," Glaser said.

"China likely expects that Trump's visit will not change this reality." □

Associated Press

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Puerto Rico's power company sees 3rd CEO in 2 weeks

By **DANICA COTO**
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico's governor named a new CEO on Wednesday to lead the U.S. territory's power company, which has now seen three top executives in two weeks as it struggles with a lack of leadership, bankruptcy and the restoration of electricity to hundreds who remain in the dark since Hurricane Maria.

Electrical engineer Jose Ortiz, who once served as executive director of the island's water and sewer company, takes over the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority on July 23. He replaces a CEO who lasted only one day in the position and took over from another CEO who announced his



In this Oct. 19, 2017 photo, a brigade from the Electric Power Authority repairs lines damaged by Hurricane Maria in community of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Associated Press

resignation last week after nearly four months on the job.

Ortiz once served as president of the power company's board, which saw five members resign last

week following an outcry over the \$750,000 annual salary that a previous CEO would have earned amid an 11-year recession. Ortiz will be making \$250,000 annually and will receive no

bonuses.

Ortiz said his priority is to rebuild Puerto Rico's credibility to help attract foreign investment and reach a deal with creditors to resolve the agency's \$9 billion public debt.

"One of the first things we have to do is pull the company out of bankruptcy," he said.

He also said he will review multimillion-dollar federal contracts awarded to U.S. companies who are helping restore and rebuild the island's electrical grid after the Category 4 storm destroyed up to 75 percent of transmission lines.

Ortiz promised that Puerto Ricans will see "substantial change" early next year at the power company and in their bills as the govern-

ment prepares to privatize the generation of energy and award concessions for transmission and distribution.

"We cannot keep planning much further," he said. "We all know what needs to be done."

Gov. Ricardo Rossello is among those who have been blamed for the ongoing turmoil at the power company. A day after the previous CEO was appointed last week, he issued a statement saying that the \$750,000 salary was not appropriate given the island's economic crisis and said that any board member who disagreed should step down. Five of them did, including the CEO who was previously part of the board. □



In this June 29, 2018 file photo, relatives and friends attend the funeral service of journalists Javier Ortega, Paul Rivas and their driver Efrain Segarra, in Quito, Ecuador.

Associated Press

Arrest made for abduction, deaths of 3 Ecuador press workers

Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)

— Authorities in Colombia have arrested an additional person for the kidnapping of three Ecuadorean press workers who investigators say were killed by a dissident band of leftist rebels.

Police announced the capture of Gustavo Angulo Arboleda on Wednesday

and said he was responsible for stopping the vehicle carrying a reporter and photographer along with their driver.

The suspect is known by his alias "Cherry" and is considered a confidante of Walter Arizala, the leader of a group of guerrillas.

Officials say Arizala's group is also responsible for the recent killing of three Co-

lombian judicial investigators along the tumultuous southern border with Ecuador.

Investigators believe the El Comercio workers were kidnapped in Ecuador and transported by rebels into Colombia.

Colombian authorities have made several arrests, but Arizala himself remains at large. □

Mexico's president-elect rebuffed by Zapatista rebels

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexico's leftist President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has been enjoying a honeymoon of sorts even with conservative businessmen, but was rebuffed by the Zapatista rebels.

The leftist Zapatistas issued a statement Tuesday denying they have had any contact with Lopez Obrador's team and saying they don't want any.

The Zapatista leadership taunted Lopez Obrador, noting his aides made an error in saying Pope Francis

would participate in their planned forums on bringing peace to violence-wracked Mexico.

"They already did it with the pope, and now with the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army)."

After winning a landslide victory in the July 1 elections, Lopez Obrador went on an offensive to reconcile with foes.

But the latest disagreement started when Alejandro Solalinde, one of the president-elect's advisers, announced he was setting up initial contact with reb-

els who have long feuded with Lopez Obrador.

The rebels, who staged a brief armed uprising in 1994 for greater indigenous rights, have largely stayed off the national stage since 2001, but remain strong in several townships they control in the southern state of Chiapas.

The Zapatistas note that Lopez Obrador won't take office until Dec. 1. and hasn't been formally recognized by the country's electoral tribunal as the man who will succeed Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto. □



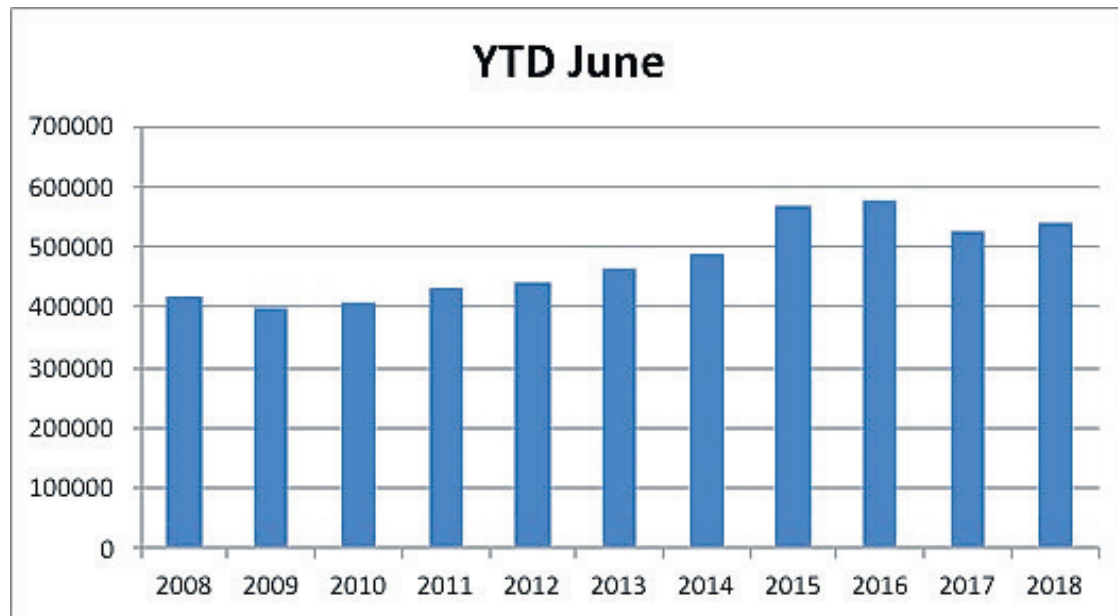
Mexico's President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador speaks to reporters from his party's headquarters in Mexico City, Sunday, July 15, 2018.

Associated Press

LOCAL



A.T.A. first half of 2018: 2.6% more visitors and 12.4% higher RevPar



ORANJESTAD – Aruba welcomed a total of 540,377 'stay-over' visitors for the first half of 2018. This is 2.6% (+13,634 tourists) more compared to same season of 2017. If we exclude the visitors from Venezuela we will see an increase of 6.9% (+33,734 tourists) which equals a total of 522,853 visitors to our island. These numbers indicate increase in the main markets for Aruba such as USA, Canada, Brazil and the Netherlands among other. For the month of June Aruba received a total of 91,877 'stay over' visitors, which is 7.7% (+6,589) more compared to the same month last year. Excluding visitors from Venezuela this will be 11.1% (8,709 tourists) more which equals to 87,362 visitors to our island for the month of June 2018.

'Stay-over' Tourism

The revenue per hotel room according to AHATA results show for the first half of 2018 an increase of 12.4% - US\$ 252.08- in the revenue per hotel room (RevPar). The occupancy rate per night (ORN) per hotel room has increased to 2.5%. From January till June 2018 the average price per room (ADR) has increased with 9.6% which is equivalent to US\$ 287.23

Aruba is being represented in 3 different continents. Compared to last year June, for 2018 tourism coming from the continent of North America has increased with 12% (+7,130 tourist/total 66,757 visitors) and brought a total of 72.7% of the total of tourism to our destination. In June, USA increased with 11.8% (+6,823 tourists/total of 64,726 tourists) and Canada increased with 17.8% (+307 tourists/total of 2,031 tourists) compared to same month in 2017. The first half of 2018, North America brought 413,633 visitors to Aruba, which is an increase of 8.1% (+30,773 visitors).

The Latin American Continent decreased to 4.6% (-683 visitors/total of 15,302 visitors) in which Venezuela dropped with 32% (-2,120 visitors/total of 4,515 visitors) compared to the month of June last year. Colombia increased with 16.2% (+653 visitors /total of 4,683 visitors) and Brazil dropped with 4.5% (-49 visitors/total 1,031 visitors). The continent of Latin America brought a total of 16.7% of visitors to Aruba, which is 19.6% of the total for tourism for the month of June for our island. The first half of 2018 Latin America brought 70,751 visitors to Aruba,

which is 19.6% (-17,234 visitors) less compared with same season last year.

With reference to Europe we can notice a decrease in tourism of 6.8% (-469 visitors/total 6,381 visitors) compared to same month of last year. United Kingdom also dropped with 47.9% (-1,183 visitors/total 1,289 visitors). As already informed earlier due to the so called 'BREXIT' in England, TUI was forced to cancel one of the charter flights from this destination to Aruba. Noticeable is that the decrease of 7,500 seats and the fall of the United Kingdom market this has been compensated with the increase from the other countries. The majority comes from the 7th additional flight per week

of KLM which A.T.A. managed to confirm November of last year. Besides, TUI Netherlands increased their amount of seats to Aruba so that A.T.A. Europe can continue its contribution to increase the high quality tourism to our destination. Other countries in Europe: Netherlands increased with 18.2% (+424 visitors/total 2,755 visitors) and Germany increased with 7.7% (+31 visitors/total 436 visitors). The European Continent represented 6.9% of tourism for Aruba for the month of June 2018. The first half of 2018, Europe brought 38,731 visitors to Aruba, which is 2.7% (-1,068 visitors) less compared to same season last year.

Cruise Tourism

During the month of June 2018, 32,565 passengers visited our destination aboard a total of 9 different cruise ships. Compared to the month of June last year, the cruise tourism dropped with 17% (-6,672 cruise visitors): in June 2017 Aruba welcomed 39,237 visitors from thirteen cruise ships. Thus four cruise ships less than last year, in which three of them had to go the so called 'dry-dock' unexpectedly, which led to unexpected cancellation which caused for us to have less cruise visitors during the month of June. The

first half of 2018, a total of 437,245 cruise ship passengers visited Aruba (an increase of 0.5% +2,108 more passengers) aboard a total of 182 different cruise ships (a decrease of 0.5% - one ship less)

Tourism Receipts / Central Bank of Aruba

According to Central Bank of Aruba the so called 'Tourism Receipts' for 2017 contributed to Florins 3,078.5 Million to our economy, which is a 6.5% increase compared to the same season in 2016.

Hotels / AHATA

According to Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association for the month of June 2018, the 'Average daily Rate' (ADR) has increased to 16.8% compared to June 2017 - US\$ 200.80 in 2017 compared to US\$ 234.47 in 2018. The revenue per available room, the so called RevPar increased to 17%- US\$ 165.91 in June 2017 to US\$ 194.06 in June 2018. The occupancy room per night (ORN) increased to 0.6% for the month of June 2018.

These results for June cover thirteen mayor hotels and is excluding Hilton & Holiday Inn. The results for the first half of 2018 are excluding Hilton and including Holiday Inn for the first 4 months. □



Loyal Friendship

ORANJESTAD — The Aruba Tourism Authority is proud to present the commemorative Emerald Coin and Emerald Certificate to Mr. Ron representing 50 years & Mrs. Lorraine Perri representing 55 years of consecutive visit to our Island.

Recently, Ms. Darline S. de Cuba had the great pleasure to honor Loyal and Friendly visitors of Aruba as Emerald Ambassador at their home away from home. Mrs. Lorraine Perri is celebrating her 55 consecutive years of visiting our island and is married to Mr. Ron Perri who has also visited Aruba for 50 consecutive years. Ron and Lorraine are from North Carolina Clayton USA.

The certificate was presented to them by the representative of Aruba Tourism Authority Ms. Darline S. de Cuba in the presence

of the General Manager of Aruba beach Club Mrs. Farida Mansur and Mrs. Ida Piternella-Brete.

The Perri family celebrated this special event sharing their fond memories of Aruba: Mrs. Perri visited Aruba for the first time in 1963 and stayed at the Basi-ruti hotel at Palm Beach, further she stayed at the Caribbean Hotel -now the Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino, as well as other hotels. Because of their yearly visits, the Perri family decided to buy timeshares at the Aruba Beach Club and at the Costa Linda Beach Resort.

Mrs. Perri wrote and brought her own book of memories from her visits to Aruba, on the request of Ernest Giel R.I.P., with pictures of all her so called 'brothers and sisters' in Aruba and all

the other family members and friends she came with from the USA to visit Aruba.

The honorees top reason for returning for so many years were:

- The warm inviting sun and wonderful sunset
- The gracious treatment from everyone
- The Sea & Climate
- Delicious food

Congratulations " Ron & Lorraine " you hold a special place in the hearts of Arubans. □



ARUBA MARRIOTT CELEBRATES THE LGBT COMMUNITY



PALM BEACH – With June largely recognized as PRIDE month in most places, Aruba Marriott joined in on the celebration by up-lighting the palm trees in front of the hotel with the colors of the PRIDE rainbow flag during the entire month of June.

In addition, Aruba Marriott will host its first LGBT Culture Day for its associates and local customers on July

25, 2018 where Marriott's Director of Multicultural Affairs; Seema Jain, together with co-presenter; Hendrik 'Endy' Croes, will give a special presentation on how to effectively communicate across cultures with a focus on the LGBT community.

These initiatives are efforts that support Marriott's cultural values of 'We Put

People First' and 'We Serve Our World' and are aimed at promoting diversity and inclusion among visitors, associates and among the local community, amplifying Aruba Marriott's support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, and conveying Aruba Marriott's commitment to making every traveler and associate feel comfortable being who

they are, everywhere they travel or work.

About Aruba Marriott:

Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino opened its door in 1995 with 411 guestrooms. In 1999 the Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club opened its door with 311 guestrooms and in

2004 Marriott's Aruba Surf Club was opened with 900 guestrooms. The Aruba Marriott family consists of about 1100 associates. The Aruba Marriott Complex is the largest in the Caribbean in terms of total guestrooms as well total employees. □



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The cover picture of the Facebook page will show another picture of a local photographer every couple of months. We love culture and like to support our local talents, therefore Aruba Today chooses to be a platform for showcasing art. Photographer Michael-Anthony Fowler took the new cover picture of Aruba Today's Facebook page, following the former local talent that shot the cover picture: Anuar Habibe. Michael is a multit talented photographer who shoots weddings and families, but also made an impressive series of drug/alcohol addicts in the streets of Aruba. He has a creative mind with always a social twist. His style is very natural and pure.

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Social entrepreneur James Ocalia in cooperation with HopeAruba Movement 'Sustainable agriculture for healthier locals and rehabilitated drug addicts'



Somewhere uphill in Alto Vista you will find a beautiful piece of land with an old, white, traditional cunucu house on it, dating from 1923. Nothing remarkable about that, you might think, as there are many of these old aunties scattered around the island. But this one has an amazing background story. Aruba Today visited the place on a warm, sticky afternoon where James Ocalia was working on the land with a handful other men.

Fair harvest

'Cas Speransa Nobo' says the name sign on the cunucu house, it refers to the new hope that is there for the students of the rehabilitation program that is run here. "We call them students rather than drug addicts or clients because they have chosen to learn another life. Their addict life is their past, the goal is to learn and graduate in a new life." The Aruban James explains that he runs his company -Gos-

hen, which means 'inundated land' - with the help of the men that are part of the rehabilitation program. "They learn to cultivate local crops and it works in two ways. For them it is a subject they learn and a daily goal in life, for me it is exercising my job and doing something good for my island at the same time."

While we are walking on the land the students are enthusiastically showing their plants, inviting Aruba

Today's journalist to taste a comcomber chiquito. The proud in their smiling faces is moving and there is definitely something magic in the air. Maybe it is best described as pure: the land, the taste of the veggie, the drive of the students and the sincerity of James, all together it is 'Hope' indeed. On the 7.000 m2 land only local crops are grown: comcomber chiquito (cucumber), jambo (okra), boonchi (beans), pika (hot peppers) form the main production. But one can also find patia (watermelon) and dragon fruit as well as moringa. "But these are not for commercial use yet." The plants are seeded and grown in the nursery, built by the students, and when strong enough are being transferred to the land. "So far we sell only to individuals that come to the house. That goes amazingly well. In the future we would like to sell to supermarkets and hotels." James works every day on the land with his men, from 1 to 5 pm. "Two of them

are above 50 years old. It is intensive as for me it is the first time I work with addicts. I started with this crew two weeks ago and already learned that I need to be strict and clear. They are different in their approach of life, this is like teaching life again as you do the same to children."

Cultural dishes

HopeAruba is a national platform for Civic Synergy that began this project two months ago. The professional caregivers, the couple Shannon and Shawn Blankenship form the United States, live on the premises with their children and work according to the program Teen Challenge. James: "They are here to set up the program for a year and also screen the participants. Hope is a movement, a collaboration of foundations, companies and volunteers that sets up social projects where there is need in society. People here tend to signal social problems and point towards the government, but Hope wants to act upon themselves and make a difference."

Impact Sunday

Coming Sunday you are most welcome to join the Impact Sunday meaning we can all help by painting, renovating, gardening and other activities to support the foundation. Come work together with the students and experience the start of the project 'Back to the Land' and bring your own fresh vegetables from the land to your hotel or home. The Impact Sunday starts at 8 AM until 2 PM. □



If you wish to visit the foundation another day, you are welcome at Alto Vista 52 between 1 and 4 pm daily, except for the weekends. Facebook: Goshen Sustainable Development Corporation VBA.

SPORTS



Houston Astros outfielder George Springer (4) celebrates his solo home run in the tenth inning during the Major League Baseball All-star Game, Tuesday, July 17, 2018 in Washington.

Bregman, Springer homer in 10th inning as AL beats NL 8-6

By BEN WALKER
AP Baseball Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A record 10 home runs. A slew of strikeouts.

The all-or-nothing All-Star Game mirrored what baseball has become.

Astros teammates Alex Bregman and George Springer homered on consecutive pitches to begin the 10th inning, and the American League beat the National League 8-6 Tuesday night for its sixth straight win.

"Standard operation nowadays, right?" said AL manager A.J. Hinch of Houston. "We're going to homer and punch out as an industry."

"There's a great love affair with both results. I mean, to kind of empty your tank and hit homers tonight at this event is probably the best thing imaginable," he said.

Continued on Page 19



In this Jan. 13, 2018, file photo, San Antonio Spurs forward Kawhi Leonard (2) scores past Denver Nuggets guard Will Barton (5) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, in San Antonio.

Done deal: Leonard goes to Raptors, DeRozan goes to Spurs

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

The Kawhi Leonard saga in San Antonio is over. So is DeMar DeRozan's time in Toronto.

An NBA summer blockbuster got pulled off Wednesday, with the Spurs sending Leonard to the Raptors as part of a four-player deal that has DeRozan heading to San Antonio. The Spurs also got center Jakob Poeltl and a 2019 protected first-round draft pick, while the Raptors acquired sharpshooter Danny Green.

For Leonard and the Spurs, there's finally closure to a relationship that seemed fractured beyond repair and played out like a soap opera as the season went along. But in the end, Spurs coach Gregg Popovich — insisting that looking back at what happened would not be worth his time, and that Leonard was a good teammate throughout his tenure in San Antonio — simply said he hopes the move works out for everyone involved.

"Kawhi, obviously, worked very hard to become the player he is," Popovich said



In this May 1, 2018, file photo, Toronto Raptors guard DeMar DeRozan (10) scores over Cleveland Cavaliers guard George Hill during the first half of Game 1 of an NBA basketball playoffs Eastern Conference semifinal, in Toronto.

Associated Press

in San Antonio, a couple of hours after the trade became official when the teams got approval on the terms from the NBA. "Our staff worked very hard to help him get there. We

wish him all the best as he moves on to Toronto. I think he's going to be great." Leonard was the 2014 NBA Finals MVP and had been with the Spurs for seven seasons, averaging 16.3

points, though was limited to just nine games last season because of a leg injury. DeRozan has been in the league for nine years, all of them with Toronto, and is a career 19.7 point-per-game scorer.

DeRozan has led the Raptors in scoring in each of the last five seasons. He was key to Toronto winning 59 games and securing the No. 1 seed for the Eastern Conference playoffs last season. But after getting swept in the second round by Cleveland, the Raptors decided massive changes were necessary — first the firing of coach of the year Dwane Casey, and now the trading of a perennial All-Star who once famously declared "I am Toronto."

DeRozan's initial reaction seemed to be one of anger and frustration.

"Ain't no loyalty in this game," DeRozan wrote in an Instagram story that appeared in the wee hours of Wednesday, around the time that ESPN and Yahoo Sports reported that the trade was approaching the imminent stage, several hours before it was final-

ized. "Sell you out quick for a little bit of nothing ..."

DeRozan did not specifically reference the trade in that post, but his message didn't exactly need translation. Raptors president Masai Ujiri has been traveling in Africa and was not immediately available for comment.

Not only is the trade huge, it's potentially risky for both teams. Leonard hasn't played since January because of the somewhat mysterious right quadriceps injury — and the level of severity was something that even some of his now-former teammates reportedly questioned last season while San Antonio was trying to qualify for the Western Conference playoffs. The Raptors clearly aren't worried about Leonard's status, and Popovich indicated Wednesday that Leonard has recovered sufficiently enough to play.

During the 2016-17 season, he averaged a career-best 25.5 points and was third in the MVP voting. When healthy, there may be no better two-way player in the game. □



In this Feb. 9, 2018, file photo, Miami Heat guard Dwyane Wade talks with the media after NBA basketball practice at the AmericanAirlines Arena in Miami.

Associated Press

By **TIM REYNOLDS**

MIAMI (AP) — Dwyane Wade has a new contract — with his shoe company. Wade and the Chinese apparel company Li-Ning announced that the three-time NBA champion has

signed a lifetime contract with the brand, which he has represented since 2012. The finalizing of that deal coincided with Wade and the company revealing his latest shoe, the "Way of Wade 7," at an event in

Dwyane Wade signs 'lifetime' deal with Li-Ning

Beijing on Wednesday. Wade appeared at the event with the company's CEO and namesake Li Ning, who is still revered in China for his gymnastics success.

"This was something I needed to do from the standpoint of building something," Wade told The Associated Press in a phone interview from China. "That's what I set out to do. This word we all talk about, legacy, I tried to set out to build a legacy for myself and my family. And after six years of that, it's cool to be here today."

Financial details of the contract were not revealed, though it's believed the total value to Wade could

reach tens of millions of dollars.

Wade's relationship with Li-Ning began in 2012, after he previously was an endorser for Converse and Jordan Brand. In addition to the continued production of basketball and lifestyle apparel, the new deal calls for Wade to take "a greater role" in youth developmental camps and basketball clinics in China and other parts of the world over the coming years.

"Both sides see the benefits of it," Wade said. "We see the opportunity to do something special."

The question remains whether Wade will be wearing his newest sneak-

ers on an NBA court again. He finished last season with the Miami Heat and there have been talks between him and the team about a return, but no decision has been made.

"When I get back from China, I'll focus on that," Wade said. "Right now, I'm focused on the game after basketball. Whatever happens in basketball, it happens. I've done everything that I can to this point to put myself that I'm in this position I am today, where I can do something that hasn't been done globally yet. The basketball will take care of itself. I'll sit down and figure that out once I get back from this tour at some point." □



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ALLSTAR GAME**Continued from Page 17**

Just to have that kind of emotion that comes with the home run, especially when the big boys hit it and especially when the Astros hit it."

Mike Trout, Aaron Judge and Jean Segura also connected for the AL in a game where every run except one scored on a homer. Scooter Gennett hit a tying two-run shot off Seattle closer Edwin Diaz in the bottom of the ninth. Joey Votto, Willson Contreras, Trevor Story, Christian Yelich also homered for the NL. There had never been more than six homers in an All-Star Game since Babe Ruth hit the very first one in 1933.

One of the homers came off Milwaukee's Josh Hader. After the game, the 24-year-old reliever took responsibility for racist and homophobic tweets that resurfaced while he was pitching.

Hader said he was immature at age 17 when several of the tweets were posted. Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem said he had spoken to Hader, and the league would have no comment before Wednesday.

"There's no excuse for what was said," Hader said. "I'm deeply sorry for what I've said and what's been going on. It doesn't reflect any of my beliefs going on now."

While several sluggers went deep, not everything went their way. Starters Max Scherzer and Chris Sale and the relievers combined to fan 15 in the first 4 1/2 innings, and there were 25 strikeouts overall.

Fitting, because this season is on pace to become the first with more strikeouts than hits, a year after a re-



MVP Houston Astros Alex Bregman holds the trophy after the 89th MLB baseball All-Star Game, Wednesday, July 18, 2018, at Nationals Park, in Washington. The American League won 8-6.

Associated Press

cord number of home runs. "You're facing power pitchers right now, so that's kind of what you expect: hit-or-miss with these guys," Boston's J.D. Martinez said.

Martinez, who leads the majors in homers and RBIs, singled and struck out in his two at-bats.

Orioles shortstop Manny Machado had fun, pulling out a camera to snap a selfie at second base after Matt Kemp doubled. By Wednesday, they could be teammates — Baltimore seems ready to trade Machado, with the Dodgers and Phillies in the mix.

"I'm just trying to enjoy this moment with the American League guys," Machado told FOX in the dugout. "If this is the last time (in a Bal-

timore uniform), hopefully I treated them well and did everything I can for the organization."

Major League Baseball, meanwhile, seemed to take a selfie of itself, with all the homers and strikeouts. This was MLB 2018, an update that's not appealing to everyone.

"Some of us are going to get them and they're going to get us. It's just how it goes," Atlanta first baseman Freddie Freeman said. Declining attendance is a concern, and the sport's owners worry that slower games with less action on the bases are taking a toll. A day after hometown star Bryce Harper electrified the crowd by winning the Home Run Derby, it was

eerily quiet for most of the evening at Nationals Park. Harper didn't excite the fans, either, fanning in his two at-bats.

The popular Presidents Race drew the biggest cheer in the middle innings, with the big-headed George Washington character prevailing.

The only thing missing was a bevy of defensive shifts. Overloaded infields are the norm now, Hinch and NL manager Dave Roberts of the Dodgers pretty much played things straight up. Bregman and Springer homered off losing pitcher Ross Stripling of the Dodgers — that's kind of how last year ended, too, with Houston battering Los Angeles pitchers in the World Series.

Bregman smiled all around the bases and earned MVP honors. He's familiar with this city, his grandfather having been the general counsel for the old Washington Senators.

"My dad grew up on Ted Williams' lap. So to see Ted Williams Most Valuable Player on this trophy is pretty special," Bregman said.

Segura's three-run homer in the eighth landed in the bullpen and broke a 2-all tie. The Seattle infielder popped up the previous pitch, but Votto, Cincinnati's reliable first baseman, dropped it for an error as he approached the dug-out railing. Segura then connected off Hader.

Judge homered in the second off Scherzer, the Nationals ace who became the first reigning Cy Young Award winner to start an All-Star Game in his home park. There was another judge at the park besides the Yankees slugger — Brett Kavanaugh, President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee.

"It's tough to barrel up some balls when you've got some of the best pitchers in the game throwing against you and you don't really have a scouting report. You're just going up there swinging," Judge said.

Trout kept up his All-Star excellence, tagging Mets righty Jacob deGrom. A two-time MVP in his event, Trout is 7 for 15 with five extra-base hits and three walks in these games.

Diaz wound up with the win and Toronto's J.A. Happ got his first pro save after giving up Votto's homer.

The AL won for the 18th time in 21 games played to a decision, and leads the series 44-43-2. Not since the early 1960s has the AL been ahead. □

MLB: Hader must take sensitivity training after tweets

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**

AP Sports Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Milwaukee Brewers pitcher Josh Hader will be required to go through sensitivity training after years-old racist and homophobic tweets of his resurfaced during the All-Star Game, Major League Baseball said Wednesday.

MLB announced that the commissioner's office would require Hader to participate in diversity and inclusion initiatives in addition to the sensitivity training. In a statement, Brewers general manager David Stearns said the team would continue to work through the issue with Hader.

Several of Hader's tweets from 2011 and 2012 came to light Tuesday night while Hader was pitching in the All-Star Game. Hader learned of the situation when he left the game, apologized and took re-



Milwaukee Brewers pitcher Josh Hader (71) throws during the eighth inning at the Major League Baseball All-star Game, Tuesday, July 17, 2018 in Washington.

Associated Press

sponsibility for the tweets, saying they did not reflect his values or the person he is now.

"During last night's game we became aware of Mr. Hader's unacceptable social media comments in years past and have since

been in communication with the Brewers regarding our shared concerns," MLB said in a statement. "After the game, Mr. Hader took the necessary step of expressing remorse for his highly offensive and hurtful language, which fails to

represent the values of our game and our expectations for all those who are a part of it."

The 24-year-old Hader said he did not "vividly" remember the tweets.

"Being 17 years old, you make stupid decisions and mistakes," Hader said Tuesday night. "I was in high school. We're still learning who we are in high school. You live and you learn. This mistake won't happen again."

Stearns said the Brewers were in contact with Hader, who is "fully aware of the severity of the situation related to his social media comments, regardless of the timeline of his posts."

"His comments are inexcusable, and he is taking full responsibility for the consequences of his actions," Stearns said. "In no way do these sentiments reflect the views of the Brewers organization or our community." Stearns said those who

have come to know Hader feel the sentiments in the tweets do not represent his beliefs, calling him a good teammate and contributor to the Brewers in every way. Hader has a 1.50 ERA in 31 appearances and made the All-Star Game in just his second major league season.

Hader spoke with Brewers teammate Lorenzo Cain after the All-Star Game. Cain said he expects the team to accept Hader's present-day statements and move on.

"At the end of the day, you've got to give people a second chance," Cain said. "You've got to forgive people. For me, it's over and done with. He said it. It got out there. I'm moving on from it."

Hader, who grew up in Millersville, Maryland, outside the state capital of Annapolis, apologized when he spoke to reporters after the All-Star Game. □

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Star CB Darrelle Revis retiring after 11 NFL seasons

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Pro Football Writer

Revis Island is closed for business.

Darrelle Revis, a star cornerback with the New York Jets and a Super Bowl winner with their archrivals, the New England Patriots, has retired.

Revis announced Wednesday on social media that he was ending an 11-season career that included four All-Pro selections.

"Today, I am closing a chapter in my life that I once dreamed of as a kid," Revis wrote. "The game of football has opened doors for me I once thought were nearly impossible to get through. My passion to play the game at an elite level brought fun and excitement to the term 'shutdown corner' which was nearly on the verge of extinction. "Covering some of the toughest assignments in league history was a challenge every Sunday, but also an honor ...

"Long Live Revis Island." The proprietor of that place was a first-round draft pick

(14th overall) by the Jets in 2007 who made an instant impact as a coverage demon. Usually charged with handling an opponent's top receiver, Revis, now 33, often forced offenses to change their game plan to avoid him.

His skills even allowed Rex Ryan, a renowned defensive coordinator before joining the Jets as head coach, to try new schemes that befuddled the opposition.

"When I had him, obviously Darrelle was in the prime of his career, and there wasn't anybody close to him," Ryan said Wednesday. "Maybe Deion (Sanders) in his prime, but that would be the only guy."

"Darrelle could handle anybody. I don't care if it's Hall of Fame guys, he locked them down and covered them and it wasn't even close."

He had 29 career interceptions, returning three for touchdowns, including a 100-yarder against Miami. In 2009, Revis was beaten out by Charles Woodson



In this Aug. 11, 2015, file photo, New York Jets' Darrelle Revis speaks to the media after a Jets practice in Florham Park, N.J. Revis, a star cornerback with the New York Jets and a Super Bowl winner with their archrivals, the Patriots, has retired.

Associated Press

for Defensive Player of the Year honors.

"That season, he was far and away the most dominant player in the NFL on defense; that he never got (defensive) MVP that year, people are crazy," said Ryan, now an analyst for ESPN. "The impact this guy had, and on the best defense in the league, I thought he should have won that."

Revis excelled against the

best, taking the likes of Terrell Owens and Steve Smith out of the game with his coverage. After a particularly lopsided first-half matchup with Smith, who was with the Panthers, the receiver asked Ryan to "get this guy off me." "That ain't going to happen," Ryan told Smith.

"His confidence and the confidence he had in his own ability, and his preparation, they were phenom-

enal," Ryan said about Revis. "Physical as hell, strong, great recovery speed, and he would beat you up on the line of scrimmage."

He also would beat you at the bargaining table. Revis played his first six years with the Jets, the latter part of that stint filled with contentious contract negotiations. Revis was dealt to Tampa Bay in 2013 for a first-round and fourth-round draft pick. He was a Buccaneer for one season, then headed to New England as a free agent, winning the championship in his lone year as a Patriot. He returned to the Jets for two seasons, with injuries slowing Revis in 2016. He made it into five games for Kansas City last season. "Darrelle is one of the best technicians to ever play the cornerback position," Jets coach Todd Bowles said. "As a defensive backs coach, you used his film as a teaching tape for young players. I spent two seasons with Darrelle and he stands out as one of the smartest players I have ever coached."

Judge denies NFL's investigator request in concussion case

By **CLAUDIA LAUER**
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A federal judge denied a request from the NFL on Wednesday to appoint a special investigator to look into what the league says is extensive fraudulent claims on the \$1 billion concussion settlement.

Judge Anita Brody wrote in her federal court ruling that the league's attorneys had demonstrated that there is "sufficient evidence of probable fraud to warrant serious concern." But Brody said a special master and a claims administrator have effectively ferreted out those claims for now.

"The audit process is working effectively," Brody wrote in her deferral ruling, saying if the claims administrator or special master notify the court an investigator is needed, "the Court will rule on the motion at that time."

The league requested an investigator and cited in its May argument an independent study it said found more than 400 claims recommended for denial based on evidence of fraud by attorneys, doctors and former players attempting to cheat the program. The league has said those attempts to scam the \$1 billion settlement fund have slowed down the awarding of valid claims.

The settlement, which took effect January 2017, resolved thousands of lawsuits that accused the NFL of hiding what it knew about the risks of repeated concussions.

It covers retired players who develop Lou Gehrig's disease, dementia or other neurological problems believed to be caused by concussions suffered during their pro careers, with awards as high as \$5 million

for the most serious cases. Attorneys for the league had cited practices such as doctors seeing players for evaluation not in clinical settings, but in hotel rooms, law offices or other places. They also cited a doctor who said she spent seven to 12 hours evaluating each patient, but approved sometimes as many as eight patients a day.

A lawyer for several plaintiffs said Wednesday that he and others representing the players supported Brody's decision.

"Since the NFL filed its motion more than three months ago, the claims process has continued to accelerate and the current audit process is working effectively," said Chris Seeger, co-lead counsel for the retired players. "We will not allow a small number of potentially fraudulent claims to be used as



This Aug. 9, 2014 file photo shows an NFL logo on a goal post pad before a preseason NFL football game between the Detroit Lions and the Cleveland Browns at Ford Field in Detroit.

Associated Press

an excuse by the NFL to deny payment to legitimately injured former players."

Seeger said as of July 16, 499 claims totaling more than \$485 million had been approved.

In their May arguments, Seeger and other attorneys noted that the instances of

fraudulent claims would be cut dramatically after rules for claims went into effect in January 2017, including a list of approved physicians to determine eligibility.

Brody warned in her ruling that she expects the process to ensure valid claims are promptly paid.

Anthony Joshua can't escape talk of Deontay Wilder

By **TERRIN WAACK, AP Sports Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Anthony Joshua was welcomed by applause on the stage. He stood front and center, promoting his Sept. 22 bout against Alexander Povetkin. Even there, he couldn't escape talk of the heavyweight he isn't fighting. Someone in the crowd jumped at the opportunity and shouted, "AJ, we want Wilder!"

"Let them train to be a fighter and fight (Deontay) Wilder," Joshua told AP. "It's easy talking about it. It's another thing doing."

But with his hands on his hips, Joshua looked in the direction of the outburst and stoically mouthed, "Same." Meanwhile, Povetkin was standing off to the side. Povetkin and Joshua were both in the West Village on Tuesday for the launch party of DAZN, a global sports streaming service. Its first event is their fight. Povetkin is partially the reason why Joshua (21-0, 20 knockouts) isn't fighting Wilder (40-0, 39 KOs) this year.

In June, the World Boxing Association ordered Joshua to fight Povetkin (34-1, 24 KOs) or have his title stripped away.

He signed, ending his chances of a Wilder-Joshua fight in 2018. Wilder said if Joshua wanted the fight to happen, it would be



In this March 31, 2018, file photo, Britain's Anthony Joshua, rear, tries to hit New Zealand's Joseph Parker during their heavyweight title bout in Cardiff, Wales.

happening. "Most definitely he could have gotten an exemption for this fight," Wilder said. "That was the least of the worries right there because everyone wants it. When everyone wants it, then there's nothing that could stand in the way of a fight of this magnitude. No possible way."

"Even when he's announcing Povetkin, they're talking about me. Everywhere we go, they're talking about this fight."

But Joshua doesn't care what everyone wants. He said he's following protocol.

"This career isn't determined by what people want," Joshua said. "It's my career. I've always pulled for and done what was right for myself, which has ultimately led me to becoming a champion."

Right now, Joshua holds three of the four major belts: WBA, IBF and WBO. Wilder has the other: WBC. If the two were to fight, which they still both believe they will, the winner would be named the undisputed heavyweight boxing champion.

The most recent boxer to claim that honor was Len-

nox Lewis in 2000.

"It's not about the big light," Joshua said. "It's not about taking from the industry. I don't want to drive a Rolls-Royce tomorrow. I don't want a one-hit fight wonder, then I'm a champion one week and few months later I've lost it because I'm living the life. I want to add to the industry, give back. I do it because I'm passionate about it."

His passion is just different from Wilder, who said he tried everything possible to make this unification fight happen.

Wilder accepted a flat fee

of \$15 million and offered Joshua a guaranteed \$50 million, plus 50 percent of the revenue if the fight took place in the U.S. Joshua wanted England. Wilder agreed.

"We've done everything," Wilder said. "I can't express how much I mean by that when I say we've done everything day and night, day and night, day and night. And the only thing they've done is try to come up with plans of distracting the fans and trying to come up with plans of lies."

More negotiations took place. Each side says something different transpired—Wilder said Joshua sent blank contracts missing a date or place; Joshua said Wilder didn't meet the deadline. There was also a disputed rematch clause.

Regardless, months passed without any signed contract, leading the WBA to step in.

Wilder thinks Joshua would rather fight Povetkin anyway because he's not ready to compete against the best.

"Wilder has a big power punch, but he likes to fight. He likes to get into the brawl a little bit," Povetkin said through a translator. "Joshua is more technical, but he also has a lot of power. It would be a different approach, but they're both great fighters." □

Warriors coach Steve Kerr receives contract extension

By **JANIE McCAULEY AP Sports Writer**

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr has received a contract extension following the franchise's repeat championship and third title in four years during his tenure.

Kerr and general manager Bob Myers, who are close friends and colleagues, said when the season ended that something would get done quickly once they began formal discussions. Kerr had one year remaining on his original \$25 million, five-year contract. Details of the extension

were not announced Tuesday.

"We're excited to have Steve under contract and poised to lead our team for the next several years," Myers said in a statement released by the team. "Under his guidance, we've been fortunate enough to win three NBA titles in four years and his ability to thrive in all facets of his job is certainly a primary reason for our success. He's a terrific coach, but more importantly an incredible human being."

The 52-year-old Kerr has said he hopes to coach at least another decade and

perhaps 15 years. His Warriors swept LeBron James and Cleveland in the fourth straight NBA Finals matchups between the rivals.

The Warriors marked themselves as a dynasty with their latest crown. They joined Bill Russell's Boston Celtics, the Chicago Bulls led by Michael Jordan and the Lakers' trio of title runs fueled by George Mikan in the 1950s, Magic Johnson and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in the '80s, and Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant nearly 20 years ago as the only franchises in NBA history to capture three championships in four years. □



In this Sunday, June 3, 2018 file photo, Golden State Warriors head coach Steve Kerr gestures during the first half of Game 2 of basketball's NBA Finals between the Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

Constant action but same result at Tour: Sky domination

By ANDREW DAMPF

AP Sports Writer

LA ROSIERE, France (AP) —

If the idea behind a short but almost entirely mountainous stage in the Tour de France was to create constant action, Stage 11 on Wednesday went according to plan. The end result, however, was the same as most recent Tours — domination from Team Sky.

British rider Geraint Thomas won the first summit finish of the race and claimed the yellow jersey on Wednesday while four-time champion Chris Froome moved up to second overall as Sky controlled numerous attacks. "Amazing position for us," said Froome, who trails Thomas, his teammate, by 1 minute, 25 seconds.

Thomas attacked on the last of four grueling climbs, powered past longtime breakaway leader Mikel Nieve in the final kilometer, and finished 20 seconds ahead of Tom Dumoulin.

Froome crossed third, just behind Dumoulin, who moved up to third overall, 1:44 behind.

The major question now may concern the dynamics between Thomas and Froome within Sky. Thomas has been one of Froome's most loyal lieutenants for years and Sky labeled him a co-leader with Froome entering this year's Tour.

"Obviously, Froomey is the leader," Thomas said. "He has won six Grand Tours. For me it's an unknown. Froomey knows how to win



Britain's Geraint Thomas celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the eleventh stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 108.5 kilometers (67.4 miles) with start in Albertville and finish in La Rosiere Espace San Bernardo, France.

a three-week race. For me, whatever happens now it is a super successful Tour. Froomey still has our best chance now — there's still more than half the race to go. "It is an ideal scenario at the moment," Thomas added.

Froome is attempting to match the record of five Tour victories shared by Jacques Anquetil, Eddy Merckx, Bernard Hinault and Miguel Indurain.

So will Thomas, wearing the yellow jersey, sacrifice himself for Froome on Thursday's climb up legendary Alpe d'Huez?

"It depends on the situation and what is going on in the race. If I have to pull to-

wards the end, then I will," Thomas said. "We will see." The top five in the overall classification is rounded out by 2014 champion Vincenzo Nibali in fourth, 2:14 behind Thomas, and Primož Roglič in fifth, 2:23 back.

Dumoulin, the time trial world champion, is Sky's closest challenger.

"He's someone who can time-trial at the end of the Tour, too. We're going to have to keep a close eye on him," Froome said, looking ahead to the race's only individual time trial in the penultimate stage.

Greg Van Avermaet, who had worn the yellow jersey since his BMC squad won the team time trial in Stage

3, lost contact midway through the stage and finished far behind.

Sky calmly rode at its own pace and slowly caught a series of breakaway riders before Thomas kicked into action with 6 kilometers remaining.

"We were expecting attacks," Thomas said. "When they go, it is never nice to see them all riding away but we had confidence in each other and we rode really well."

Thomas, who is from Wales, required slightly less than 3 1/2 hours to complete the 108.5-kilometer (67-mile) route from 1992 Winter Olympics host city Albertville to La Rosiere Espace

San Bernardo ski station.

It was his second career stage win at the Tour, having claimed the individual time trial that opened last year's race. He wore the yellow jersey for four days last year — before dropping to second behind Froome — then crashed out on a descent in Stage 9. "To wear the yellow jersey is always a massive honor," Thomas said. "To do it two years in a row is really nice." After going up the beyond-category ascents to Montee de Bisanne and Col du Pre, plus the second-category Cormet de Roselend, the stage concluded with the unprecedented and lengthy 17.6-kilometer climb to La Rosiere — a ski resort linked to La Thuile in the Italian region of Valle d'Aosta. With views of Mont Blanc atop Montee de Bisanne, there was also a technical and tricky descent from Cormet de Roselend.

The first overall contender to attack was Alejandro Valverde up the Col du Pre. Dumoulin then escaped from the peloton with a downhill attack from Cormet de Roselend and joined up with Valverde on the final climb. While Valverde quickly dropped back, Dumoulin kept up his pace and was only surpassed by Thomas.

Sprinting standout Mark Cavendish, meanwhile, finished far behind and missed the time limit, ending his Tour. □



Martin Truex Jr. celebrates his win in the NASCAR Cup Series auto race Saturday, July 14, 2018, at Kentucky Speedway in Sparta, Ky.

Associated Press

Truex, Furniture Row seeking new primary sponsor for 2019

DENVER (AP) — Furniture Row Racing and defending NASCAR Cup Series champion Martin Truex Jr. are looking for a new sponsor.

The team said Wednesday that 5-hour ENERGY will end its activity in NASCAR after this season, leaving the No. 78 Toyota seeking a primary backer for 2019. This season, 5-hour ENERGY was the co-primary sponsor on the No. 78 along with Bass Pro Shops/Tracker

Boats for 30 Cup races.

The energy shot company has been a primary NASCAR sponsor for nearly a decade, including the last seven at the Cup level. Rise' Meguiar, sales president for company parent Living Essentials, praised Furniture Row and said it was simply a business decision.

In March, Lowe's said it would not sponsor seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson after this season

and other major backers have scaled back on auto racing spending, including Target, Home Depot, Sprint, UPS, Subway, Go-Daddy and Best Buy. □

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Why is Facebook keen on robots? It's just the future of AI

By **RYAN NAKASHIMA**
AP Technology Writer
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Facebook announced several new hires of top academics in the field of artificial intelligence Tuesday, among them a roboticist known for her work at Disney making animated figures move in more human-like ways.

The hires raise a big question — why is Facebook interested in robots, anyway? It's not as though the social media giant is suddenly interested in developing mechanical friends, although it does use robotic arms in some of its data centers. The answer is even more central to the problem of how AI systems work today. Today, most successful AI systems have to be exposed to millions of data points labeled by humans — like, say, photos of cats — before they can learn to recognize patterns that people take for granted. Similarly, game-playing bots like Google's computerized Go master AlphaGo Zero require tens of thousands of trials to learn the best moves from their failures.

Creating systems that require less data and have more common sense is a key goal for making AI smarter in the future.



This photo provided by Facebook shows Yann LeCun.

"Clearly we're missing something in terms of how humans can learn so fast," Yann LeCun, Facebook's chief AI scientist, said in a call with reporters last week. "So far the best ideas have come out of robotics."

Among the people Facebook is hiring are Jessica Hodgins, the former Disney researcher; and Abhinav Gupta, her colleague at Carnegie Mellon University who is known for using robot arms to learn how to grasp things.

Pieter Abbeel, a roboticist at University of California, Berkeley and co-founder

of the robot-training company Covariant.ai, says the robotics field has benefits and constraints that push progress in AI. For one, the real world is naturally complex, so robotic AI systems have to deal with unexpected, rare events.

And real-world constraints like a lack of time and the cost of keeping machinery moving push researchers to solve difficult problems.

"Robotics forces you into many reality checks," Abbeel said.

"How good are these algorithms, really?"

There are other more ab-

stract applications of learnings from robotics, says Berkeley AI professor Ken Goldberg. Just like teaching a robot to escape from a computerized maze, other robots change their behavior depending on whether actions they took got them closer to a goal. Such systems could even be adapted to serve ads, he said — which just happens to be the mainstay of Facebook's business.

"It's not a static decision, it's a dynamic one," Goldberg said.

In an interview, Hodgins expressed an interest in a

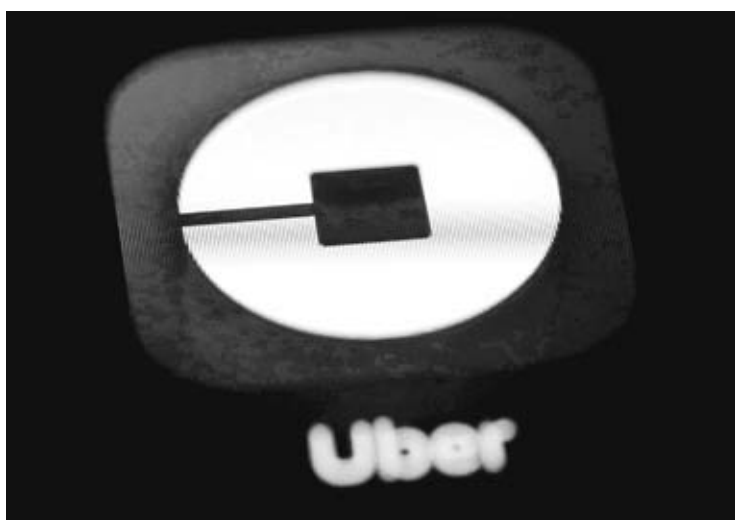
wide range of robotics research, everything from building a "compelling humanoid robot" to creating a mechanical servant to "load and unload my dishwasher."

While she acknowledged the need to imbue robots with more common sense and have them learn with fewer examples, she also said her work in animation could lead to a new form of sharing — one in which AI-powered tools could help one show off a work of pottery in 3-D, for example.

"One thing I hope we'll be able to do is explore AI support for creativity," she said. For Facebook, planting a flag in the hot field also allows it to be competitive for AI talent emerging from universities, Facebook's LeCun said.

Bart Selman, a Cornell computer science professor AI expert, said it's a good idea for Facebook to broaden its reach in AI and take on projects that might not be directly related to the company's business — something that's a little more "exciting" — the way Google did with self-driving cars, for example.

This attracts not just attention, but students, too. The broader the research agenda, the better the labs become, he said. □



This March 20, 2018, file photo shows the Uber app on an iPad in Baltimore.

By **MICHAEL LIEDTKE**
AP Technology Writer
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Uber is facing a U.S. government investigation into allegations that the ride-

hailing service set up a pay structure that discriminated against its female workers. The U.S. the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission opened the probe in

Source: Uber facing probe into alleged gender discrimination

August 2017, according to a person familiar with the investigation. The person insisted on not being identified because the inquiry is considered confidential.

The EEOC declined to comment Monday. Uber said it has already revamped its compensation practices and introduced other measures designed to ensure its male and female employees are treated fairly.

Some of the changes have been rolled out since Uber hired Dara Khosrowshahi as its CEO in September 2017, shortly after the EEOC

opened its probe. Since his arrival, Khosrowshahi has been focused on cleaning up Uber's corporate culture poisoned by a pattern of sexual harassment and other abuses that included a yearlong cover-up of a major computer break-in and the use of duplicitous software to thwart government regulators.

The incidents have cast a cloud over Uber while it has been battling fiercer competition from its biggest U.S. rival, Lyft, and trying to reverse its long history of huge losses as it prepares

to sell its stock on the public markets for the first time next year.

If the EEOC finds Uber broke the law by paying women differently than men for the performing the same jobs, the agency could slap fines on the company as punishment.

San Francisco-based Uber already has paid \$245 million in stock to self-driving car pioneer Waymo to settle allegations that it stole technology from the Google spin-off to help build a fleet of self-driving cars. □

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Next generation: Business owners mentor their heirs apparent

By JOYCE M. ROSENBERG
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The plan was for Greg Goodman to sell his auto supply store and retire about the time he turned 60. Then Plan B came along — his son Chandler decided to join and eventually take over the family business instead of becoming an architect. Goodman, now 54, is focusing on building his Alta Mere franchise in Oklahoma City rather than getting it ready for sale. He's also mentoring his son, although Chandler won't graduate from college for another two years.

"I make sure he's involved in every aspect of this business moving forward," Greg Goodman says. "I let him in on everything and every decision I make."

As small business owners contemplate retirement, many are thrilled to have the chance to teach their children or other relatives how to run their companies. There's plenty of opportunity for that to happen — the government estimates that nearly a fifth of U.S. companies are family owned. At some businesses, especially those that have been in a family for generations, children start learning some of the basics while on vacation from school.

But owners looking to pass a company to their children or other younger relatives find themselves doing much more intensive training, including their heirs apparent in key decisions and entrusting them with major projects. The savviest owners learn some things themselves — they listen to and embrace the different ideas and perspectives their children bring.

Sometimes members of the next generation al-



In this July 10, 2018, photo, Greg Goodman and his son Chandler Goodman, pose for a photo at the counter in their Alta Mere franchise in Oklahoma City.

ready have a business background and need to adapt what they know to the specifics of the family company. Alison Tocci, 61, has been working with her nephew, Bryan Sawyer, so he'll be ready to take over the family Bull Run restaurant when she retires. Sawyer left his job at an accounting firm in 2010 to help Tocci turn around the then-struggling restaurant in Shirley, Massachusetts, that she had recently bought from a relative.

Bull Run, founded in 1946 by Tocci's father, has quadrupled its revenue since she took it over, and she wants Sawyer to keep it on its trajectory. So while he takes part in day-to-day operations and weekly meetings, Tocci stresses to him that informal and off-the-cuff meetings with employees, other restaurateurs, consultants and others can help with innovation.

In a successful transition from one generation to the next, a parent treats a child as they would any new

hire, says David Lassman, a management professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz College.

"If you bring someone in from the outside, you'd say, 'Here's our business, what are our challenges, where should we go?'" Lassman says. He also suggests that owners who tend to be domineering in family situations tone that down, or their children won't be able to think for themselves or take risks as business owners.

A successful transition can require an owner to let the child make significant changes to the company's business model, even selling off parts of it, says Lauri Union, a professor of entrepreneurship at Babson College. While products, services or whole divisions may go, what does remain is what Union calls the family's entrepreneurial legacy. Union says parents need to, as she puts it, "let go."

"There is a process for letting go — doing it too quickly can be as bad as

doing it too slowly or not at all — and that process varies from family to family and business to business," she says.

Rita Tabatchnick expects her son Jason to be more than her shadow or stand-in as he becomes increasingly involved in the family's soup business, Tabatchnick Fine Foods.

She is looking for him to put his own imprint on the business.

"The new generation comes up with new desires, new foods, new technology, and you have to listen to their ideas," says. Tabatchnick, 63, who plans

to retire within the next 10 years.

Jason, who began working at the company when he was 13, is on the board and participates in Rita's meetings, key phone calls and negotiations. When the company's Somerset, New Jersey, factory needed extensive renovations last year, Jason evaluated contractors' bids. When his mother had surgery recently, he took on some of her responsibilities. "He doesn't just do the grunt work," she says.

Ultimately, though, owners and their children also need to be prepared for the possibility that the planned handoff might not work out, Union says. Children need to have the room to say, "I don't know if this is going to work for me. I may need an off-ramp," Union says. If the son or daughter takes over a company and is unmotivated, it can be hard for the business to survive.

Kathleen Kuhn is realistic about the possibility that her son Ryan might decide against taking over her HouseMaster inspection company. Ryan is doing home inspections, getting hands-on experience, and "little by little we're exposing him to things," says Kuhn, 57. She hopes he'll be ready in four or five years. □



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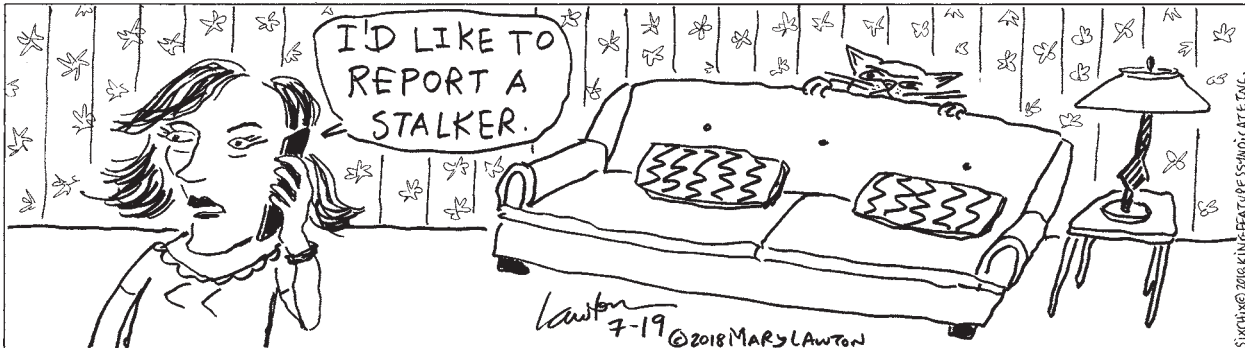
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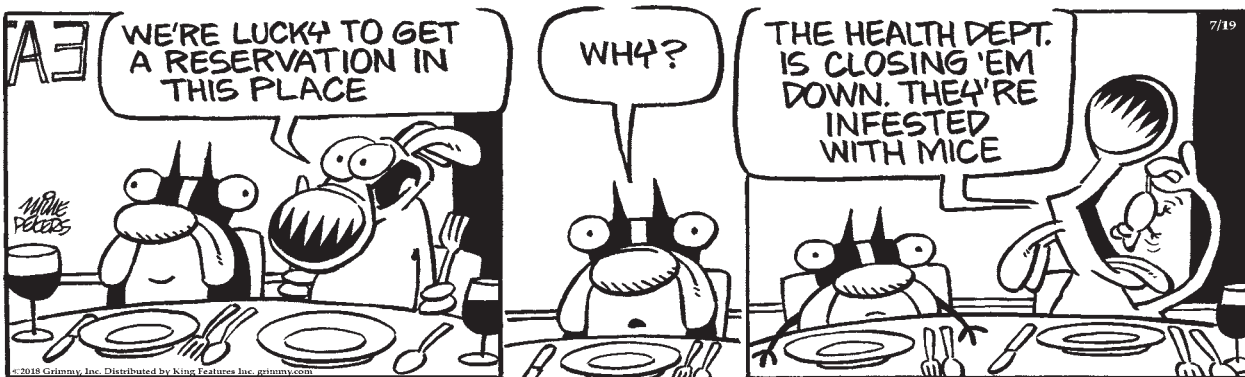
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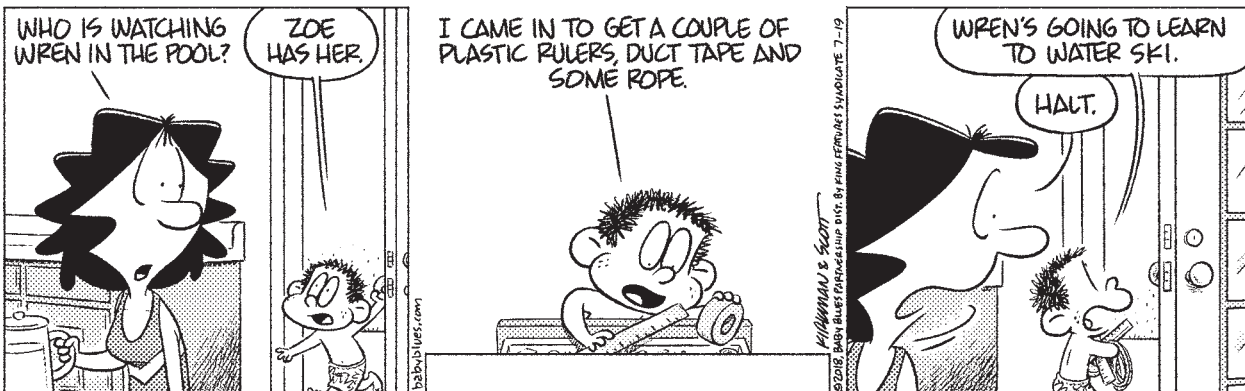
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			3		8			
6								2
	3		1	6	2		7	
5		6				9		7
		4				8		
2	1					3		6
	6		5	1	4		8	
9								5
			2		7			

Difficulty Level ★★★

7/19

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

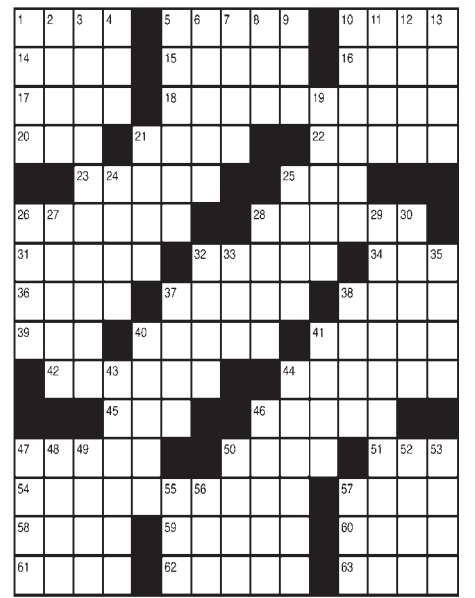
8	4	7	3	6	9	5	2	1
2	3	5	4	1	8	7	9	6
1	6	9	2	7	5	8	3	4
5	9	3	6	4	7	2	1	8
4	7	2	5	8	1	9	6	3
6	8	1	9	2	3	4	5	7
7	2	6	1	5	4	3	8	9
9	1	8	7	3	2	6	4	5
3	5	4	8	9	6	1	7	2

ACROSS

- Carry
- Boisterous
- Cushiony
- All __; listening
- Sidestep
- Healthy
- Fellow
- Seeps into
- Attila, for one
- Torn in two
- Distressed
- Waterbirds
- Prefix for arranged or approved
- Allow into the group
- Seashores
- Remedies
- Drag one's feet
- Wheel center
- Journey
- VP Agnew
- Smokey or Yogi
- Drink slowly
- Nom de __; pen name
- Insect stage
- Engraver
- Smiled broadly
- Depressed
- Lariat
- Fluttering tree
- Offspring
- Scourer's pad
- Yale or Harvard
- Word in a red octagon
- Toy with a tail
- Vital artery
- Demolish; level
- "Trek"
- Mike or Cicely
- Fret; worry

DOWN

- Texas __; school in Lubbock
- Pearl Harbor's island
- Student's record
- Sixth sense, for short
- Feel remorse
- Kilns
- Desire
- ...FDR, HST, __, JFK, LBJ...
- However
- Ovals and squares
- Dinner in the barn
- Make a getaway
- Trial run
- Not urban
- Criticizes
- Sob
- Explorer Marco
- Play divisions
- Last name for a physicist couple
- Give a hoot
- Temperature regulator
- Debonair
- __ on; incite
- Conway or Allen
- Actor Pitt
- Killed
- Cries from the flock



Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

DEPP	ALSO	SHOE
OARED	DEEP	TINY
STONE	UTTERANCE	
ESS	CAL	RATTED
ELECT	ACE	
RECAPT	STENCH	
ERUPT	SLIER	HER
ARTS	SPEND	DANA
LEO	AMASS	FANCY
DRAGON	SLIDES	
MEL	LOOSE	
ATTEND	ONA	LBS
BOUNTEOUS	TRIAL	
LORD	RUSE	SUEDE
ELKS	STAR	GREW

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- T-Mobile store purchase
- Not as much
- Astute
- Sprawling tree
- Game often run by the state
- Flightless birds
- In a __; sulky
- Gyro bread
- Gentlemen
- Leak out
- Gush forth
- Traitor
- __ sauce; teriyaki marinade
- Dads of Jrs.

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5th Floor/Pool View
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5th Floor/Pool&Ocean View
Wk 29, Unit 2524 \$6,500
5th Floor/Harbor View
Wk 32, Unit 2509 \$5,750
5th Floor/Pool&Ocean View
Wk 32, Unit 2332 \$3,500
3rd Floor/Harbor View
Wk 33, Unit 2332 \$3,500
3rd Floor/Harbor View
Wk 34, Unit 2121 \$5,000
1st Floor/Pool View
Wk 34, Unit 2123 \$5,000
1st Floor/Pool View
Wk 34, Unit 2515 \$3,750
5th Floor/Pool View
Wk 35, Unit 2120 \$4,000
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Wk 35, Unit 2315 \$3,500
3rd Floor/Pool View
Wk 35, Unit 2349 \$6,500
3rd Floor/Ocean Front
Wk 38, Unit 2503 \$2,750
5th Floor/Ocean Front

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Pool View
Wk 28, Unit 112 b/c \$5,000
Pool View
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Wk 33, Unit 213C \$4,000
Garden View
Wk 35, Unit 140C/226C \$5,000
Pool View

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Study links air pollution to drop in national park visitors

By **MATTHEW BROWN**

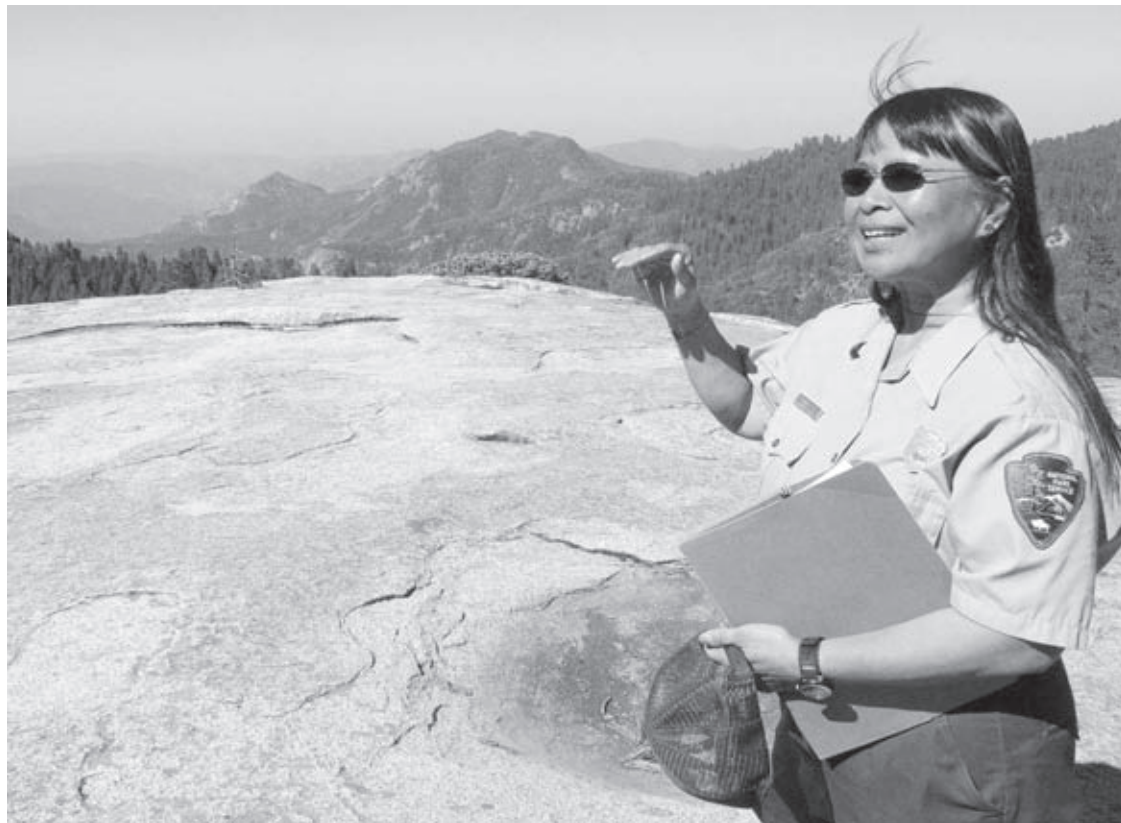
Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Visitors appear to be steering clear of some U.S. national parks or cutting visits short because of pollution levels that are comparable to what's found in major cities, according to a study released Wednesday.

Researchers at Iowa State and Cornell universities looked at more than two decades of data on ozone pollution at 33 parks — from Shenandoah to Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon and Yosemite. They say visitor numbers dropped almost 2 percent when ozone levels went up even slightly and by at least 8 percent in months with three or more days of high ozone levels compared with months with fewer days of high ozone.

Study co-author Ivan Rudik said air quality warnings issued by parks and other government agencies may be causing the visitation drop. That's consistent with previous research on so-called avoidance behavior in response to pollution alerts in other settings. The study sought to control for seasonal variations and daily changes in the weather.

"Even though the national parks are supposed to be icons of a pristine land-



In this May 11, 2012, file photo, Sequoia National Park air resource specialist Annie Esperanza explains how ozone diminishes the view from Beetle Rock in Sequoia National Park, Calif.

Associated Press

scape, quite a lot of people are being exposed to ozone levels that could be detrimental to their health," said Rudik, an assistant professor of economics at Cornell.

The study, published in the journal *Science Advances*, comes as national parks have seen record numbers of visitors in recent years despite any concerns over pollution.

Ozone, the main ingredient in smog, is formed when small particles of pollution

from cars, power plants and industrial facilities react with sunlight. It limits visibility and can cause respiratory problems.

In parks, ozone is carried in on the wind and also caused by traffic and other activities.

The National Park Service was reviewing the study but hasn't evaluated whether ozone and visitation are linked, spokesman Jeffrey Olson said. He said nine parks issue ozone alerts when warranted — Aca-

dia, Great Smoky Mountains, Mammoth Cave, Pinnacles, Rocky Mountain, Sequoia, Kings Canyon, Shenandoah and Yosemite.

Virginia Tech economist Kevin Boyle, who has researched ozone in parks and was a peer reviewer for the study, said it provides "strong, suggestive evidence" that air pollution is changing people's behavior when planning a park visit. Boyle said follow-up research is needed to

confirm the findings.

Ozone concentrations nationwide have generally fallen since the Clean Air Act was amended in 1990 to address the problem, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Yet amounts still regularly exceed national guidelines, and the researchers determined that many national parks have pollution levels similar to New York or Los Angeles.

A comparison of ozone in parks to levels in the 20 most populous U.S. cities showed they were "statistically indistinguishable," according to the study.

At Sequoia National Park, about 200 miles (322 kilometers) north of Los Angeles, there have been more bad ozone days than in the city in all but two years since 1996, the study said.

Park visitors who live nearby are more likely to change their plans than out-of-town visitors who have sunk money into airplane tickets, lodging and rental cars, said John Loomis, an economics professor at Colorado State University who was not involved in the study.

Studies of air quality alerts and the reactions they trigger among schoolchildren in England and children and the elderly in Los Angeles have reached similar conclusions. □



In this image from video made available by Blue Origin, the company's New Shepard capsule lands during a test in West Texas on Wednesday, July 18, 2018.

Associated Press

Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin launches spacecraft higher than ever

By **MARCIA DUNN**

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin rocket company shot a capsule higher into space Wednesday than it's ever

done before.

The New Shepard rocket blasted off from West Texas on the company's latest test flight. Once the booster separated, the capsule's escape motor fired, lifting

the spacecraft to an altitude of 389,846 feet. That's 74 miles or 119 kilometers.

It's part of a safety system intended to save lives once space tourists and others climb aboard for suborbital hops.

Wednesday's passenger was Mannequin Skywalker, an instrumented dummy in a blue flight suit that's flown before, plus science experiments.

The booster and capsule — both repeat fliers — landed successfully. It was the ninth test flight and lasted 11 minutes. □

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A Comic-Con without Marvel, HBO gives others a chance to pop

By LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

Over 130,000 pop culture devotees are descending on San Diego's Gaslamp District on Wednesday for the annual four-day comic book convention Comic-Con, the big, bright and very heavily branded confab of costumed superfans and the corporate sponsors vying for their attention — and dollars.

Interested in dining at a working replica of the "Demolition Man" Taco Bell for the movie's 25th anniversary? Or witness a mock court-martial of Star Wars' Poe Dameron for leading a mutiny in "Star Wars: The Last Jedi"? How about a wine and beer tasting with Neil deGrasse Tyson? Or a "Ready Player One" experience with retro gaming stations and recreation of Room 237 from "The Shining"? If you like pop culture, it's highly likely there is something tailor-made for you at Comic-Con 2018. What started as a 300-person event in 1970 has evolved into a massive operation with events year-round. But San Diego Comic-Con is the marquee oc-



In this Thursday, July 20, 2017, file photo, guests attend the first day of Comic-Con International in San Diego.

Associated Press

casion. Tickets for four-day access plus preview night can set attendees back \$276, before hotel, travel costs, food and any souvenirs. And attendees have come to expect exclusive merchandise on the convention center floor, newsy announcements from some of Hollywood's biggest studios, and screenings of anticipated films

and television shows.

This year Warner Bros. is coming armed with stars and footage from "Aquaman," "Shazam!," "Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald" and "The LEGO Movie 2"; Sony is hyping its Spider-Man spinoff "Venom"; and Universal Pictures will be teasing "Halloween" and M. Night Shyamalan's "Glass." On the television side, fans will get a glimpse of new "Doctor Who" star Jodie Whittaker and have a chance to check out "Star Trek: Discovery" and "Riverdale." And streaming services like Netflix and Hulu will be back with properties like Marvel's "Iron Fist" and the new J.J. Abrams-produced "Castle Rock," based on Stephen King stories. □

Cowboy Junkies' 'All That Reckoning' instantly great

By PABLO GORONDI
Associated Press

Cowboy Junkies, "All That Reckoning" (Latent Recordings)

Cowboy Junkies return from a yearslong recording sojourn with "All That Reckoning," one of the best albums of their extended career.

Occasionally ramping up the quiet, haunting sounds of "The Trinity Sessions," their 1988 classic, with doses of tougher arrangements and topical themes, the three Timmins siblings and bassist Alan Anton again perform up to their high standards. "The Things We Do to Each Other" reflects the wider context, a song about manipulation and power:

"Fear is not so far from hate/ So if you get the folks to fear/ It only takes one small



This cover image released by Latent Recordings shows "All That Reckoning," a release by Cowboy Junkies.

twist/To kick it up a gear." Another peak is "When We Arrive," which combines individual and ideological issues.

Over 30 years into their career, "All That Reckoning" shows Cowboy Junkies in peak form, adding another inspired, alluring album to their repertoire. □

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Denzel Washington kills in 'The Equalizer 2'

By **MARK KENNEDY**, AP Entertainment Writer

You won't usually find Denzel Washington in a movie sequel. He just doesn't do them. Something about not wanting to repeat himself. So there must be something special indeed for him to break his own rule for "The Equalizer 2." Fans of the first film will instantly know why Washington is drawn to the character of Robert McCall, a quiet middle-aged retired special-ops agent who fiercely believes in justice, likes to help others and dispenses the occasional lethal killing for those deserving.

"We all have to pay for our sins," he tells a group of very bad guys in the new, highly satisfying edition, before vowing to hunt each one dead. His only regret? He can kill them only once. "The Equalizer 2" re-connects many of the people behind the 2014 debut alongside the always-vital Washington — Antoine Fuqua returns to direct, as does writer Richard Wenk, and actors Bill Pullman and



This image released by Columbia Pictures shows Denzel Washington in a scene from "Equalizer 2." Associated Press

Melissa Leo. McCall first appeared in the mid-1980s on TV with Edward Woodward playing him as a bit of an English dandy. In the film series, Washington plays McCall as a tad obsessive-compulsive, but not consistently. He's the kind of guy who brings his own tea bag to a restaurant in a neatly

folded napkin and arranges the cutlery just so. But, when prompted, his vision suddenly becomes hyper-clear and he meticulously pre-plans every step in taking down a room of thugs, often without a gun. He's like Monk crossed with Sherlock Holmes.

The second film takes place sometime later, with McCall now a Lyft driver, selectively helping people

he encounters. He's kind to old people (a Holocaust survivor, for extra depth) and little kids, who adore him. He mentors a troubled teen (Ashton Sanders), hoping to steer him away from drug dealing and toward art school.

Few people could pull off this cheesy sainthood like Washington, oozing charisma and self-assured masculinity.

When a group of smarmy, cocky Wall Street types abuse an intern during a coke-fueled party, Washington drives her to the hospital and then returns to wreck vengeance, slicing one dude with his own luxury credit card and then taunting his bleeding victims with "I expect a five-star rating." It takes him a scant 29 seconds to destroy the room full of rich snobs; he times it, naturally. The film somewhat confusingly toggles through various initial threads before landing on the main one — someone crucial to McCall's murky past is murdered in Brussels and that reveals a barrel of bad government apples. The film thus strays far from its roots as a vehicle for McCall to be the avenging angel for a needy stranger.

But we get to see McCall solve the crime from his Boston apartment by putting himself in the crime scene like an episode of "Crossing Jordan" and then avenge the death. Oh, there's also a hurricane crashing up the East coast, timed for the climax, a little over the top if we're being honest. □

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FRI 3:55 | 5:15 | 6:35 | 7:50 | 9:15 | 10:25 | 11:00
SAT 2:40 | 3:55 | 5:15 | 6:35 | 7:50 | 9:15 | 10:25 | 11:00
SUN 2:40 | 3:55 | 5:15 | 6:35 | 7:50 | 9:15

AMANDA SEYFRIED | MERYL STREEP
MAMMA MIA!
HERE WE GO AGAIN
CXC PREMIUM LARGE FORMAT AUDITORIUM
2D MONTHURS 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10
FRI 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10 | 11:40
SAT 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10 | 11:40
SUN & HOL 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10

DWAYNE JOHNSON | NEVE CAMPBELL
SKYSCRAPER
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MONTHURS 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20
FRIDAY 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SATURDAY 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20 | 11:35
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:50 | 7:05 | 9:20

ADAM SANDLER | SELENA GOMEZ
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 3
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MONFRI 4:30 | 6:40 | 8:50
SAT&SUN 2:20 | 4:30 | 6:40 | 8:50

MARISA TOMEI | Y'LAN NOEL
THE FIRST PURGE
MONTHURS 4:55 | 7:15 | 9:35
FRIDAY 4:55 | 7:15 | 9:35 | 11:55
SATURDAY 2:35 | 4:55 | 7:15 | 9:35 | 11:55
SUN & HOL 2:35 | 4:55 | 7:15 | 9:35

CHRIS PRAIT | JEFF GOLDBLUM
JURASSIC WORLD
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MONSUN 4:10 | 6:50

PAUL RUDD | EVANGELINE LILLY
ANT-MAN AND THE WASP
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES
MONFRIDAY 4:15 | 6:50 | 9:25
SAT & SUN 1:45 | 4:15 | 6:50 | 9:25

SYLVESTER STALLONE | DAVE BAUTISTA
ESCAPE
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FRI & SAT 9:30 | 11:40

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Dax Shepard finds creative fulfillment with new podcast

By **ALICIA RANCILIO**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Dax Shepard acts, writes and directs, but his latest creative venture is fulfilling him in ways he didn't expect. He's begun recording podcasts called "Armchair Expert" in a guest house attic on property he owns with his wife Kristen Bell. New episodes drop Mondays. Shepard says his experience as a guest on other podcasts sparked the idea of starting his own. The first episode was with Bell. He's since added conversations including Ellen DeGeneres and Jimmy Kimmel and various experts in their fields, like a clinical psychologist who can talk



In this March 11, 2017 file photo, Dax Shepard poses for a portrait in West Hollywood, Calif.

about parenting strategies. He ranks Donald Glover as No. 1. on his "never-ending" wish list. "Armchair" is going on the

road with episodes recorded in front of an audience. Tickets will be available for upcoming events in Texas and Toronto. □

Associated Press

Russian rarity revived at Bard College

By MIKE SILVERMAN

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Lonely demon meets beautiful girl and falls in love. Girl is ambivalent. Demon kills off girl's fiancé. Girl flees to convent. Demon pursues her. Girl dies and goes to heaven. Demon is condemned to eternal solitude. Stripped to its essentials, that's the plot of Anton Rubinstein's 1871 opera "Demon," adapted from a poem of the same name by the Russian romantic writer Mikhail Lermontov. The lushly melodious opera remains popular in Russia, but it's little known elsewhere — making it a natural choice for Bard College's 15th annual SummerScape festival of the arts, which specializes in staging what founder (and college president) Leon Botstein considers unjustly neglected works.

"We don't have any constraints here because we're doing it exactly as we want to," director Thaddeus Strassberger said in an interview earlier this month during a break from rehearsals on the campus 90 miles north of New York



This photo provided by Bard Fisher Center, from top, Nadezdah Babintseva, Efim Zavalny and Olga Tolkmit perform in "Demon."

City. "Ninety-nine percent of people coming to Bard will be seeing it for the first time."

Strassberger acknowledges that, taken literally, the story might be hard for modern audiences to swallow. "You can't just walk out the door in 2018 and have conversations with angels and demons or people think you're a little bit crazy," he said. So Strassberger is fo-

cusing on the heroine, Tamara, a Georgian princess who never meets the man she's engaged to. At the demon's instigation, the fiancé is killed by Tatars as his caravan is crossing the Caucasus Mountains on his way to the wedding.

"The engagement is kind of strange, it's very similar to Lucia (di Lammermoor in the Donizetti opera) or any kind of arranged mar-

riage," Strassberger said. "The wedding was never really about her being in love with this guy. It's a trick a patriarchal society can use on a young girl's impressionable mind." As for the demon's intrusion into her life — as well as an angel who ultimately rescues her — Strassberger said, "It isn't necessarily something that visits her. She's interested in some-

thing other than what her family has given her. In your own mind you could create an option considerably more interesting."

In his staging, "The demon and the angel have actual forms," he said. "They interact with her, they have a physical presence. But whether they exist when she is not communicating with them is another question. I don't show them onstage having a rich life when she's not there."

Because she's attracted to the demon, Strassberger said, "she starts to feel guilty. ... It all starts to become a metaphor for filial duty, for what you're supposed to do versus free agency." Strassberger said it's important to note the opera is titled "Demon" rather than "The Demon."

"Leon is very insistent on this," he said. "In Russia there are no article adjectives, 'the' or 'a.' So if it's 'The Demon' then it's like there's a baritone who's standing there and he's the demon. But if it's 'Demon,' then it seems to us much more conceptual as to the existence as some sort of negative force." □

Ty Segall & White Fence reunite for frenzied 'Joy'

By PABLO GORONDI

Associated Press

Ty Segall & White Fence, "Joy" (Drag City)

The ever-prolific Ty Segall reunites with White Fence (Tim Presley) on "Joy," a freaky, fragmented album where squeaks and barks interrupt delightful harmonies and psychedelic power pop, totaling 15 tracks in just over 30 minutes.

"Joy" is a slightly less frenzied follow-up to their 2012 collaboration, "Hair." In parts, the album is like sweeter-sounding 13th Floor Elevators and the tunes could be excerpts from a rock opera for people with attention-

deficit hyperactivity disorder. Get distracted for a minute or two and whole songs may have passed you by. There's a lot of great music on "Joy" but the interludes unnecessarily break the flow.

While this album's "Other Way" and the 17 seconds of "Prettiest Dog" are reminiscent of its predecessor's "Crybaby" and "Scissor People" in their intensity, the duo also emphasizes the layers of Who-like vocals and plenty of acoustic guitars. "Do Your Hair" is a prime example of this approach.

The psychedelic introduc-

tory, "Beginning," has bird noises, surf-rock drums, angelic singing and guitars in stereo, while the brief "Room Connector" sounds like the instrumental demo version of a catchy song. "Body Behavior" and "Good Boy" both cross the finish line around the 2-minute mark, packing a wealth of rhythms, guitars and weird lyrics.

"A Nod" could be an outtake from "Tommy," a reflective moment from the pinball wizard/spiritual leader: "My friends say I need followers/But I want to believe in me."

The lovely, heartfelt "My Friend" — "I see you falling down again/But I'm still around my friend" — is a melange of acoustic guitars and stays around long enough, nearly 4 minutes,



This cover image released by Drag City shows "Joy," a release by Ty Segall & White Fence.

Associated Press

to become one of the album's most gratifying highlights. Bird sounds end it, so

if you listen to the album on repeat it creates a loop with "Beginning." □

Homegirl Cafe offers 'platos' by ex-gang members with hope

By **RUSSELL CONTRERAS, Associated Press**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — In a different time, at another place, and under other circumstances, you might have run away from Latisha Valenzuela and Glenda Alvarenga. But at Homegirl Cafe, a Los Angeles breakfast and lunch spot with a Latino twist, the two waitresses welcome you with smiles and friendship.

"You alone?" Valenzuela asked when I recently visited.

"Don't worry. We'll keep you company."

After seating me, she tells me, "you'll want our cinnamon coffee. We make it ourselves." She says it as if we've been friends since middle school.

Here, in the City of Angels, Homegirl Cafe offers a unique dining experience with food prepared by former gang members gaining new skills. It's a haven for them, to be sure.

But the popular cafe in the city's Chinatown is a special place for visitors, too, providing carefully crafted meals along with inspiration from ex-inmates who willingly tell stories about how they are seeking a better life.

And where these hands once hurt others, now they are steering their energies to serve pleasurable, satisfying dishes made with love and perseverance.

The hip cafe is an offshoot of the Homeboy Industries social enterprises founded by Jesuit priest Greg Boyle. After working in one of the city's poorest and most



Elvia Hernandez, 30, prepares food in the kitchen at Homegirl Cafe Monday, July 16, 2018, in Los Angeles.

gang-plagued regions, he quickly found out that businesses wouldn't hire former gang members and inmates, even when they had marketable skills.

So, he formed nonprofit businesses aimed at giving jobs and training to the "least of these," as the poor and vulnerable are described in Scripture.

He formed Homeboy tortillas, Homeboy bakery and then, Homegirl Cafe.

Trainees learn all aspects of culinary arts while developing social skills that create tender encounters with visitors.

In addition to job training, the former gang members can take advantage of tattoo removal, anger management classes and drug treatment.

Former enemies become

friends. Instead of trading gunshots, they shoot playful texts to each other. That tenderness is passed along to customers, who include writers, lawyers, actors and teachers.

When a new staffer shows up, "you can tell she's scared and ready to fight," Alvarenga told me during my visit. "We make sure we hug her and show nothing but love. Most of the time, they just start crying."

Plates like the chilaquiles — fresh crisp tortilla chips tossed with warm tomatillo salsa, egg, crema fresca, and queso cotija — are made from ingredients that come from urban farms. The Manoy's, a sandwich made of braised shredded chicken prepared Central American-style with pickled cabbage, onions and

mayonnaise, is another unique option.

The homegirls can tell you exactly how it's prepared. In addition to the food are the stories.

Boyle has told this one many times in speeches, interviews and his latest book: Actress Diane Keaton once came in for brunch with a guest.

A waitress, a former gang member who'd spent time in prison, went to serve her. Keaton asked for advice on platos and the waitress gave her suggestions. Then, it hit the waitress.

"Wait, I feel like I know you," the waitress reportedly said. "You so look familiar."

"Oh I don't know," Keaton said. "I must have that face."

"No. Now I know," the waitress said. "We were locked

up together!"

The story always gets a laugh, but Boyle retells it to highlight the power of kinship, and how a former gang member and an Oscar winner connected in a most unlikely place.

Boyle has authored two books, and his inspirational quotes are on T-shirts and fliers around the cafe.

To some of the homies, he's the first person who ever showed them unconditional love without judgment.

"Ah man, when Father Boyle walks down the street and into this place ... people follow him like Jesus," said Erika Carlos, a woman who spent eight years in prison who now helps run the gift shop.

"All the homies want him to give them a blessing."

At the gift shop, visitors can buy an array of Homeboy Industries or Homegirl Cafe shirts, hoodies, hats and bags.

The clothing is designed by former gang members who are being taught new job skills. Workers like Carlos are happy to share their stories, or those of others who inspired them.

After my first visit, I returned for a Mother's Day special with my Texas-born mother, father and sister. My mother, who was abandoned briefly as a baby before being adopted by an immigrant woman from Mexico, recognized immediately that she was among the forgotten and feared.

"This feels like home," she told Valenzuela.

Valenzuela smiled, then replied, "You are home." □



Mario Lundes, 36, pours a cup of coffee for a customer at Homegirl Cafe Monday, July 16, 2018, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press



A selection of pastries is arranged at Homegirl Cafe Monday, July 16, 2018, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press